

L. Davy A
MODERN SYSTEM
O F
NATURAL HISTORY.

CONTAINING
Accurate Descriptions, and faithful Histories,
O F
ANIMALS, VEGETABLES, and MINERALS.

Together with
Their Properties, and various Uses in MEDICINE,
MECHANICS, MANUFACTURES, &c.

Illustrated

With a great Variety of COPPER-PLATES, accurately
drawn from Nature, and beautifully engraved.

By the Rev. SAMUEL WARD,
Vicar of Cotterstock, cum Glapthorne, Northamp-
tonshire; and others.

V O L. VI.

*The great Creator did not bestow so much Curiosity and
Workmanship upon his Creatures to be looked upon with a
careless incurious Eye.*

Derham's Physf. Theol. Book xi.

L O N D O N :

Printed for F. NEWBERRY, the Corner of St. Paul's-
Church-yard, Ludgate-street. 1775.



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O R N I T H O L O G Y .

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T H E T U R K E Y.

THE turkey was unknown to the ancient naturalists, and even to the old world before the discovery of America. It was a bird peculiar to the new continent, and is now the most common wild fowl of the northern parts of that country. It was first seen in France in the reign of Francis I. and in England in that of Henry VIII. The first birds of this kind must therefore have been



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THE
NATURAL HISTORY
OF
BIRDS;
OR,
A COMPLETE SYSTEM
OF
ORNITHOLOGY.

THE TURKEY.

THE turkey was unknown to the ancient naturalists, and even to the old world before the discovery of America. It was a bird peculiar to the new continent, and is now the most common wild fowl of the northern parts of that country. It was first seen in France in the reign of Francis I. and in England in that of Henry VIII. The first birds of this kind must therefore have been

brought from Mexico, which conquest was completed in 1521. *Ælian* indeed mentions a bird found in India *, which some have supposed to be the turkey; but *Gesner* and *Pennant* are of opinion that it was either the peacock, or some bird of that genus. Those who have resided in the East-Indies, inform us, that though the turkey is bred there, it is not considered as a native of the country, but only as a domestic bird.

With us turkeys are, when young, the tenderest of birds; yet, in their wild state, they are found very numerous in the forests of Canada, which are covered with snow above nine months in the year. In their natural woods they are much larger and more beautiful than in their state of domestic captivity: their feathers being of a dark grey, bordered at the edges with a bright gold colour. These feathers are wove into cloaks by the savages, to adorn their persons; they also form them into umbrellas and fans, but never think of taking those animals into keeping, which they are supplied with in

* *Allan Hist. An. lib. xvi. c. 2.*

sufficient abundance by the woods. The hunting of the turkey makes one of the savage's principal diversions, and its flesh contributes greatly to the support of his family. When he has discovered the place of their retreat, he takes with him his dog which he has trained to the sport, and sends him into the midst of the flock. As soon as the turkies perceive their enemy, they run with such swiftness as to leave the dog at a great distance behind: he still continues to follow them, knowing from experience that they must soon be tired, as they cannot run fast for any considerable time. At length he obliges them to take shelter in a tree, where, quite exhausted with fatigue, they sit till the hunter arrives, who, with a long pole, provided for that purpose, knocks them down one after the other.

Turkies are furious among themselves, but extremely weak and cowardly against other animals which are less powerful than themselves. The common cock frequently makes the turkey keep at a distance. Indeed the turkey-cock will fly from the most contemptible animal that will venture boldly

boldly to face him. On the contrary, any thing that seems to fear him, he pursues with the insolence of a bully; particularly children and lap-dogs, to which he seems to have a peculiar aversion. After such an exploit, he returns to his female train, displays his plumage around, struts about the yard, and seems to glory in his valour.

The female seems of a milder disposition: she lays eighteen or twenty eggs, larger than those of a hen, which are whitish, and speckled, or rather freckled with dusky yellow spots. Though extremely tender, when young, they become more hardy as they grow older, and attend the mother to considerable distances, in pursuit of insects, which they prefer to any other food; they are consequently not very expensive to the farmer.

Norfolk turkies are said to be the largest of this island, weighing from twenty to thirty pounds each. But in the East-Indies, where they are known only in their domestic state, they are often seen to weigh fifty or sixty pounds.

The turkey expands its tail in the manner of a peacock: the neck and
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head are bare of feathers, and covered only with a purple or reddish skin, which, when it assumes stateliness, swells, and is blown up, as it were, to a considerable size. It has a red fleshy appendix, or carbuncle, resembling a worm, upon the upper chap of the bill, which it can raise or contract at pleasure. The tail consists of eighteen feathers, and each wing has twenty-eight prime winged feathers. The legs have a kind of rudiment of spurs, which are very conspicuous. The flesh of a hen-turkey is sweet and delicate, and not inferior to that of a pullet, but that of a turkey-cock is not so excellent.

“ Most of our housewives,” says a Swedish author on husbandry, “ have long despaired of success in rearing turkies, and complained that the profit rarely indemnifies them for their trouble and loss of time : whereas, continues he, little more is to be done than to plunge the chick into a vessel of cold water, the very hour, or if that cannot be, the day it is hatched, forcing it to swallow one whole pepper-corn, and then restoring it to its mother.

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From that time it will become hardy, and fear the cold no more than a hen's chick. After which it must be remembered that these useful creatures are subject to one particular malady whilst they are young, which carries them off in a few days. When they begin to droop, examine carefully the feathers on their rump, and you will find two or three, whose quill part is filled with blood. Upon drawing these the chick recovers, and after that requires no other care, than what is commonly bestowed on poultry that range the courtyard.

“ These articles are too true to be denied ; and, in proof of the success, three parishes in Sweden have, for many years, gained several hundred pounds by rearing and selling turkies *.”

THE PHEASANT.

NEXT to the peacock, the pheasant is the most beautiful of birds, as well for the vivid colour of its plumes, as for their happy mixtures and variety.

* Rural Oeconomy, p. 739.

The pencil cannot represent any thing so glossy, so brilliant, or points so finely blending into each other. It is said that when Cræsus, king of Lydia, was seated on his throne, adorned with all the pomp of Eastern splendour, he asked Solon if he had ever seen any thing so fine ! The Greek philosopher, unawed by the objects before him, or priding himself in his native simplicity, replied, that after having seen the beautiful plumage of the pheasant, he could be astonished at no other finery.

It is certainly a most elegant bird. The iris of the eyes is yellow, and the eyes are surrounded with a scarlet colour, sprinkled with small black specks. On the fore-part of the head there are blackish feathers mixed with a shining purple. The top of the head, and the upper-part of the neck are tinged with a darkish shining green. In some pheasants the top of the head is of a shining blue, and the head and neck appear either blue or green, according to the situation of the spectator. The feathers on the breast, the shoulders, the back, and the sides, are blackish, with edges of a most exquisite colour, which appear either black or purple,
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according to the different light in which the bird is viewed; and under the purple there is a transverse streak of gold colour. The tail is about eighteen inches long, from the end of the middle feathers to the root: the legs, feet, and toes, are of the colour of horn. On the legs there are black spurs which are shorter than those of a cock: two of the toes are connected by a membrane. The hen is not so beautiful as the cock, she being nearly of the colour of a quail: she lays eggs but once a year, which sometimes amount to eighteen or twenty in number.

This bird is not only beautiful to the eye; it is also delicate when served up to the table; but, as if disdaining the protection of man, it has left him to take shelter in the thickest woods and the remotest forests. The cock, the turkey, the pintada, and all others of the domestic kind, when once reclaimed, have still continued in their domestic state, and persevered in the habits and appetites of willing slavery. But the pheasant, though taken from its native warm and pleasant retreat, has still continued its attachment to native freedom, and now continues wild among
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us, making the most envied ornament of our parks and forests; where it feeds upon acorns, berries, and grain, the scanty produce of this cold climate.

But though, in the woods, the hen-pheasant lays from eighteen to twenty eggs in a season, yet, in a state of captivity, she seldom produces above ten. In the wild state, she hatches and rears up her brood with patience, vigilance, and courage; but when kept tame, she attends improperly to this duty, so that a hen is generally her substitute to sit for her. The pheasant therefore had better be left at large in the woods, than be again reclaimed to captivity. When wild, its fecundity is sufficient to stock the forest; its elegant plumage adorns it; and unlimited freedom adds a finer flavour to its flesh.

Many have lately endeavoured to take these birds once more from the woods, and to keep them in places fitted for their reception. Like others of the poultry kind, they have but little sagacity, and are easily taken. At night they roost upon the highest trees of the wood; and come down by day among the brakes and bushes in search

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of food. In the winter their foot-steps may be traced in the snow, and they are frequently taken in springs. They are the most easily shot of any birds, for when they rise, they always make a whirring noise, which is a sufficient notice to the sportsman; and being a large mark, and flying very slow, the most indifferent gunner can hardly miss them.

When pheasants are taken young into keeping, they become as familiar as chickens. The female, in her natural state, makes her nest of dry grass and leaves; therefore, when brought up tame, the same materials should be laid for her in the pheasantry, which she herself, in general, will dispose in a proper manner. If she neglects to sit upon her eggs, a common hen must be procured to hatch them, which task she will perform with perseverance and success. It is extremely difficult to rear the young ones, and care must be taken to supply them with ant-eggs, that being the food the old one leads them to gather when wild in the woods. In order to make these go the farther, they may be chopped up with curds or other provision. These birds when young,

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require to be fed with great exactness, both with regard to quantity and time; and it is necessary sometimes to vary their food; wood-lice, ear-wigs, and other insects being occasionally very agreeable to them. The place in which they are reared, must be kept extremely clean, and their water should be changed two or three times a day: they should not be exposed in the morning till the dew is off the ground, nor suffered to remain abroad after sun-set. When they become adult, they are capable of shifting for themselves, and then they are remarkably fond of oats and barley.

When full grown, the pheasant seems to feed indifferently upon every thing that offers, and we are assured by a French writer, that one of the king's sportsmen shooting at a parcel of crows, which were gathered round a dead earcase, upon his coming up he saw, to his great surprize, that he had killed as many pheasants as crows; but this account seems to be exaggerated, tho' it is admitted by other respectable writers that these birds are of a carnivorous disposition.

There are many varieties of the pheasant as well as of all other domestic fowls. There are white pheasants, crested peafants, and spotted pheasants; but the golden pheasant of China is the most beautiful of all others.

THE HORNED INDIAN PHEASANT.

THE size of this bird is between that of a hen and a turkey, and in shape it greatly resembles a turkey. The bill is brown; and on the fore-part of the head, and all round the eyes it is covered with a kind of blackish hair. The top of the head is red, and over each eye, pointing backwards, there is a horn of a callous substance. A flap of loose skin hangs down the fore-part of the neck, which is of a beautiful blue, with orange coloured spots. The neck and breast are reddish, inclining to orange, and the breast and lower part of the neck are spotted with white; each spot being encompassed with a black ring. The back, wings, tail and belly are of a yellowish brown, which gradually intermixes with the red round
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the bottom of the neck. The whitish spots on the back, wings, tail, and belly, resemble pearl drops, the sharp ends being towards the head. These are all encompassed with black, and the thighs are brownish. It has spurs, and the legs and feet resemble those of a cock.

THE RED CHINA PHEASANT.

THIS bird is somewhat smaller than the European pheasant, and has a bill of a brownish colour. The feathers on the upper part of the head are also brownish, but it has a very curious crest of long scarlet feathers hanging down on the back of the neck, and beautifully variegated with scalloped lines. The back is yellow, and the fore-part of the neck, breast, and belly, are of a beautiful red. The covert feathers of the wings are of a deep blue, interspersed with black spots; but the first row of the other feathers are spotted with brown on a yellow ground.

THE WHITE CHINA PHEASANT.

THIS resembles the red China pheasant in size and form, but it has a dusky yellow bill, with a curious crest of black feathers extending from the base of the bill to the upper part of the head, and hanging down the hinder-part of the neck. The eyes are surrounded with a ring of white feathers, and that is encompassed with a fine scarlet circle, spotted with red. This also continues to the hinder part of the head. The neck, back, and wings are white, variegated with a few dark spots and shades; the breast, belly, and thighs are black; the feet are scarlet, and the claws are black.

THE PEACOCK PHEASANT.

ACCORDING to Mr. Edwards, this is also a Chinese bird. On the upper feathers of the wings there are blue spots like eyes, and the tail is spotted with green. Like the common cock, its legs are armed with spurs.

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We are informed by Tertre that there is a bird called a pheasant in the Caribbee Islands, which is extremely beautiful, and is as large as a capon; but it has longer legs, and its feet resemble those of a peacock. The feathers on the neck and breast are of a shining blue, and the back is of a brownish grey. The wings and tail are short, and entirely black. The flesh is as good as that of the European pheasants.

THE BRASILIAN PHEASANT.

THIS is rather smaller than the common hen, but the tail is broad and about twelve inches long. The plumage is principally black, intermixed with a little brown and white. It can at pleasure erect the black feathers on the head in the form of a crest. The upper-part of the neck is naked, having only a red skin on it. The lower-part of the body, and the hind-part of the wings are cloathed with black and white feathers intermixed. The tail, and the upper-part of the legs are black, and the feet are of a beautiful red. It is
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also called by the natives Jacupema, a name given to it on account of its cry, which is *Jacu Jacu*. This bird is easily tamed, and its flesh is esteemed good wholesome food.

THE GUINEA HEN, OR PIN-TADA.

THE Guinea hen is about the size of a common hen, but as it has longer legs, it appears much larger. Its head is naked, its back is round, and its tail turns downwards like that of a partridge. The head is covered with a kind of helmet, and the whole plumage is black or dark grey, speckled with white. It has wattles which proceed from the upper lip, and not from the lower chap as in cocks. This gives it a very peculiar air, and its restless gait and odd chuckling sound, sufficiently distinguish it from all other birds.

The Guinea-hen came originally from Africa,* but is now well known all over Europe. In different countries, however, it has different names. By some it is called the Barbary hen; by

* Bosman's hist. of Guinea, 218

others

others the Tamis bird ; and by others, the bird of Numidia. We have given it the name of the Guinea hen, because it was probably first brought to us from that part of Africa.

They are seen in vast flocks in many parts of their native country. All their habits are like those of the poultry kind, and they agree in every other respect, except that the male and female so exactly resemble each other, that they can hardly be distinguished. The only observable difference lies in the wattles, which in the cock are of a blueish cast ; in the hen, they incline a little to a red. In our climate, they lay about five or six eggs in a season ; but they are more prolific in their sultry regions at home. They are kept in this country rather for shew than use, as their flesh is not much esteemed, and great attention is required in rearing them.

The ears of the Guinea hen are placed behind the wattles, and are quite uncovered, but the apertures are very small. The feet are of a greyish brown, covered with large scales before ; but there is only a rough skin behind, and the hinder toe is short.

THE

THE BUSTARD.

THIS is the largest land bird that is a native of Britain : it is much larger than the turkey, the male at a medium weighing twenty-five pounds. The breadth is about nine feet, and the length almost four. The male has a tuft of feathers about five inches long on each side of the lower mandible. The head and neck are ash-coloured ; the back is barred transversely with black, bright, and rust colour. The greater quill feathers are black ; the belly white ; and the tail, which consists of twenty feathers, is marked with broad bars of red and black : the legs are of a dusky colour.

The female is about half the size of the male ; the crown of the head is of a deep orange colour, traversed with black lines, and the rest of the head is brown. The lower part of the neck before, is ash-coloured. In other respects it resembles the male, only the colours of the back and wings of the male are brighter.

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The bustard was once much more numerous among us than it is at present; but the encreased cultivation of the country, and the extreme delicacy of its flesh, has greatly thinned the species. It would probably have been long since extirpated, but for its peculiar manner of feeding. Had it continued to seek shelter among our woods, it must have been destroyed in proportion as they were cut down. If in the forest, the fowler might approach it unobserved; and the bird, from its magnitude, would be so excellent a mark, that it could not easily be missed. But the bustard now inhabits only the open and extensive plain, where it is plentifully supplied with food, and where every invader may be seen at a great distance.

These birds are frequently seen in flocks of fifty or more, in the extensive downs of Salisbury-Plains, in Newmarket and Royston Heaths, in Cambridgeshire, the Dorsetshire uplands, and so on as far as March or Lothian, in Scotland. They run very fast, and when on the wing, can fly slowly for several miles without resting; but they take flight with great difficulty,
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and are sometimes run down with greyhounds. They generally keep near their old haunts, seldom wandering above twenty or thirty miles. Their food consists of the berries which grow among the heath, and those large earthworms that appear in great quantities on the downs, before sun-rising in the summer. These being replete with moisture answer the purpose of liquids, and enable them to remain a long time without drinking, on those dry and extensive tracts. But, as a security against drought, nature has furnished the males with a pouch *, the entrance of which lies immediately under the tongue, and which will contain near seven quarts; and this they probably fill with water, to supply the hen when sitting, or the young till they can fly.

Like other birds of the poultry kind, bustards change their mates at the season of incubation, which is about the latter end of summer. They make their nests upon the ground, by scraping a hole in the earth, and sometimes lining

* The world is obliged to the late Dr. Douglas for this discovery.

with a little straw or grass. They lay only two eggs, which are about the size of those of a goose, of a pale olive brown with dark-coloured spots. They are about five weeks in hatching, and the young ones run about the instant they are out of the shell.

These birds live about fifteen years; but they cannot be propagated in a domestic state, as they cannot then be supplied with a sufficiency of that food which they principally delight in.

There are also bustards in France, which appear in large open plains, particularly near Chalons, where, in the winter, vast numbers of them assemble; one of which is always placed as a sentinel, on an eminence at a distance from the flock, to give notice of the smallest appearance of danger.

THE INDIAN BUSTARD.

THIS bird is about twenty inches in length, and slenderer in proportion than any bird of this kind. The bill is of a whitish colour, and longer than those of our English bustards. The sides of the head are of a bright brown,
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but the top of the head, and the whole neck, are covered with black feathers hanging loosely. The back, rump, and tail, are of a light brown. On the tail are transverse black bars. All the covert feathers of the wings are white, except that the smaller ones about the joint are edged with black. The greater wing feathers nearest the back, are brownish, spotted with black, and the middle quills are white, with transverse bars speckled with black. The greater quills are white on their outer webs, and the tips gradually become of a dark ash-colour. The whole of the under side, from the breast to the tail, is clothed with black feathers. The legs are long, and the toes short; the legs are also bare a considerable distance above the knee. The toes are three; all pointing forward, as in other birds of this kind, and are covered with whitish scales, but the claws are dusky.

This bird is an inhabitant of Bengal in the East-Indies, and was first described by Mr. Edwards, who took it from a drawing in the possession of Dr. Mead.

THE LITTLE BUSTARD.

THE little bustard is about the size of a pheasant. The bill is of a flesh-colour at the base, and black at the point: the head, the back part of the neck, the back, and the covert feathers on the wings, are brown, marked with irregular spots of black. The throat is white, and the fore-part of the neck of a lightish brown, with a dusky mixture. The covert feathers on the inside of the wings, and the ridges of the wings are white; the outer quills are white at the bottom; but black at the points. The breast and sides are white, spotted with black, and the belly and thighs wholly white. The feathers of the tail are brown, speckled with very small spots of white, and barred with transverse black lines. It has only three toes, which all stand forwards, and the legs and feet are covered with yellow scales.

THE COCK OF THE WOOD.

THE female is called the hen of the wood. This species is found in no

28 *The Cock of the Wood.*

other part of Great-Britain, than on the northern islands of Scotland, and even there it is not often seen. It was formerly found in Ireland, but the breed now appears to be extinct there. It inhabits woody and mountainous countries; particularly forests of pines, birch-trees, and junipers; feeding on the tops of the former, and the berries of the latter, which sometimes give the flesh such a flavour, that it is hardly eatable. It seldom lays more than six or seven eggs, which are white, marked with yellow, and about the size of a common hen's egg.

The length of the male is about two feet eight inches, and the breadth three feet ten inches, and often weighs fourteen pounds. The female is smaller, not exceeding twenty-six inches in length, and forty in breadth. The male and female also differ greatly in colour: the colour of the bill of the male is a pale yellow; the nostrils are covered with dusky feathers; the head, neck, and back are elegantly marked, slender lines of grey and black running transversely. The feathers are long on the hind-part of the head, and there is a large tuft of long feathers beneath

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The Cock of the Wood. 29

the throat. The upper part of the breast is of a rich glossy green; the rest of the breast and belly is black, intermixed with white feathers. The coverts of the wings are crossed with undulated lines of black and reddish brown: the exterior webs of the greater quill feathers are black, with a white spot at the setting on of the wings. The tail consists of eighteen feathers, the middle of which is the longest; they are black, spotted with white on each side. The legs are very strong, covered with brown feathers.

The bill of the female is dusky, the throat red; the head, neck, and back, marked with transverse bars of red and black: on the breast are some white spots, and the lower-part is of a plain orange colour: the tail, which is of a deep rust colour, is barred with black. She usually lays her eggs in a dry place, and on mossy ground. During the time of incubation, when she is obliged to leave her eggs in quest of food, she covers them up so judiciously with moss or dry leaves, that it is no easy matter to discover them. As soon as the young are hatched, they run after the mother with great agility, though sometimes they

they are not entirely disengaged from the shell. The hen leads them forward into the woods, shews them the ant's eggs, and the wild mountain berries, which are their principal food while they are young. The strength of their appetites encreases with their age, and as they advance in both, they feed upon the tops of hether, and the cones of the pine-tree. Thus they soon arrive to perfection; and as they are hardy birds, and their food continually before them, it might naturally be supposed they would encrease abundantly; but the contrary is the truth; their numbers are reduced by rapacious birds and beasts, and still more by contests among rivals.

The whole brood follows the mother for about a month or six weeks, when the young males entirely desert her, and live together in great harmony till the beginning of spring. At this season they begin to feel the genial access, and a period is put to all their former friendships. They, for the first time, consider each other as rivals, and the fear of rivalry totally extinguishes the spirit of society. They attack each other with the fury of game cocks, and

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are at that time so inattentive to their own safety, that two or three of them are sometimes killed at a single shot.

THE BLACK COCK.

THIS is also called the heathcock, and black game. Like the former, these birds delight in woody and mountainous situations. In summer they feed on bilberries, and other mountain fruits, and in the winter on the tops of the heath. This species, and the cock of the wood, are frequently seen in the woods, perching like the pheasant. In the summer they frequently descend from the hills to feed on corn: they never pair, but, in the spring; the male takes his station upon some eminence, where he crows and claps his wings: this signal is a sufficient summons for every female within hearing. The hen usually lays about six or seven eggs. At the beginning of winter, the young males forsake their mother, and remain in flocks of seven or eight till spring; at which time they inhabit the woods. Like the cock of the wood, they are then very quarrelsome, fight together like game cocks, and are so entirely off their guard, that they may easily be shot.

The black cock is about one foot ten inches in length, and two feet nine inches in breadth, and weighs almost four pounds: the bill is dusky; the plumage of the body is black, glossed with a shining blue over the neck and rump. The coverts of the wings are of a dusky brown. On the thighs and legs are dark brown feathers, with white spots on the former: the tail is forked, and consists of sixteen black feathers. The feathers under the tail, and the inner coverts of the wings are white. The female does not exceed two pounds in weight; she is about eighteen inches in length, and two feet six inches in breadth. The head, neck, and breast are marked with alternate bars of black and dullish red. The back, coverts of the wings, and tail are of the same colours, but the red is deeper. The tail, which is a little forked, consists of eighteen feathers, variegated with red and white.

THE GROUSE.

THIS bird is also called the moor-cock, or the red game. It is about one third larger than the partridge, and the

the colour resembles that of a woodcock, but is somewhat redder. It has a small head, a slender body, a short black bill; the throat is red; the plumage on the head and neck is of a tawny red. The back and scapular feathers are of a deeper red, with a large black spot on the middle of each feather. The breast and belly are of a dullish brown, inclining to purple, crossed with several narrow dusky lines. The female is smaller, and her colours are duller than those of the male. The breast and belly are spotted with white, and the tips of some of the coverts of the wings are also white. These birds build their nests upon very low-trees or shrubs, and lay from six to ten eggs, which are white, with a greenish cast, and speckled with reddish spots. The young brood follows the hen the whole summer; in the winter they join in flocks of about forty or fifty, and become remarkably shy and wild: they generally keep on the tops of the hills, and are seldom found on the sides, or in the vallies; their food is the mountain berries, and the tops of heath. They strike with their bill like a hen, and fly with their feet hanging down.

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THE PTARMIGAN.

MR. Brisson joins this bird with the white partridge of Mr. Edwards, plate LXXII. but these are two very different birds. The ptarmigan is either of a pale brown or ash-colour, mottled with dusky spots. The tail of the ptarmigan consists of sixteen feathers; the two middle of which are ash-coloured, mottled with black, and tipped with white; the two next are black, with a slight mark of white at their ends. These birds are found in this island only in the Scottish Highlands: their weight is about fourteen ounces, their length thirteen inches, and three quarters, and their breadth twenty-three inches. Their feet are cloathed with feathers to the claws: the nails are long, broad, and hollow: the first circumstance guards them from the rigour of the winter, and the other enables them to form a lodge under the snow, where they lie in heaps to protect themselves from the cold.

THE PARTRIDGE.

THE partridge may be said to be the property of the sportsman; the

British laws have even taken it under their protection; and, like a peacock or a hen, it may be considered as a private property. The only difference is that the partridge is fed in our farms, and the others in our yards: the former have it in their power to change their master, by changing their habitation, and the latter are contented captives.

In England, the partridge is a favourite delicacy at the tables of the rich; and the desire of keeping it to themselves, has induced them to procure such laws for its preservation, as do not seem to harmonize with the general spirit of legislation. By an act passed in the tenth year of the reign of his present majesty, any person who shall wilfully take, kill, or destroy any pheasant or partridge, or use any gun, dog, snare, net, or other engine for that purpose, in the night, between one hour after sun-setting, and one hour before sun-rising, shall for the first offence be committed to gaol, or the house of correction, for any time not exceeding six months, nor less than three; and for every such subsequent offence, for any time not exceeding *twelve* months, nor less than *six*;

six : and shall also within three days after commitment for the first or any subsequent offence, be *once publicly whipped* in the town, &c. where such goal or house of correction shall be ; between the hours of twelve and one in the day.

What can be more arbitrary than to talk of preserving the game, which can have no other meaning than that the inferior people shall abstain from what the rich have taken a fancy to keep for themselves? If partridges and pheasants, like common cocks or hens, could be made legal property, be taught to keep within certain districts, and to feed only on those grounds which belong to the man whose entertainments they improve, it might then, with some appearance of justice, be admitted, that a man who fed them had a right to claim them : but, the case is otherwise : they feed every where, and upon every man's ground. Those birds which are nourished by all, by the law of reason, belong to all ; nor can any one man, or any body of men claim any exclusive right to them, while they continue in a state of nature.

It is said in our old law books of authority *, that all wild animals, such as deer, hares, foxes, and the like, are those which on account of their swiftness, or fierceness, fly the dominion of man; and in those no person can have a property, unless they are tamed, or reclaimed by him. Hence it appears that, by the common law, every man hath an equal right to such creatures as were not naturally under the power of man; and that the mere capture or seizure of them, created a property in them.

The immense quantity of game about the environs of Paris, has been considered as a badge of the slavery of the people; and yet the French have no game laws for the remoter parts of the kingdom: the game is indeed preserved for the king in some few places, but is free in almost every other part of France. In England the prohibition is general; and the peasant, or even the farmer, cannot possess what even slaves in other countries are entitled to.

The cock partridge weighs about fifteen ounces, the female thirteen: the

* See Bacon's Abr. 612, 613.

bill is white, and the crown of the head is brown spotted with reddish white. The cheeks and forehead are of a deep orange colour, but much paler in the males than in the other sex. The neck and breast are beautifully marked with narrow undulated lines of ash-colour and black; and in the hind-part of the neck is a strong mixture of rust colour. On the breast of the male there is a broad mark in the shape of an horse-shoe, of a deep orange hue. On the back, each feather is marked with several semi-circular lines of black and reddish brown; the greater quill feathers are dusky, spotted with pale red upon each web. It has eighteen feathers in the tail, the six outermost on each side being of a bright rust-colour; the others are marked with irregular lines of black and pale reddish brown. The legs are whitish.

The partridge is found in every country, and in every climate; as well in the frozen regions about the Pole, as the torrid tracts under the Equator. Wherever it resides, it appears to adapt itself to the nature of the climate. In Greenland, it is brown in summer; but

when

when the icy winter appears, it has a new covering suited to the season : its outward plumage then assumes the colour of the snows, amongst which it seeks its food, and it is cloathed with a warm down beneath. Thus by the warmth and the colour of its plumage, it is doubly fitted for the place ; the one defending it from the cold, and the other preventing it from being noticed by the enemy. The partridges of Barakonda are longer legged and swifter footed ; and seek a residence in the highest rocks and precipices.

All naturalists agree that the partridge is immoderately addicted to vanity. Those who are excited by curiosity to be more particularly informed concerning this particular, we beg leave to refer to Pliny, lib. x. c. 23, and Edwards's preface to Gleanings, part 2. Their manners and habits, in other respects, resemble all those of the poultry kind ; but their cunning and instincts seem superior to those of the larger kinds. Living in the very neighbourhood of their enemies, they have perhaps more frequent occasion to put their little arts in practice, and learn, by habit, the means of evasion or safety.

ty. Whenever a dog, or any other formidable animal, approaches the nest of a partridge, the hen practises every art to draw him away. She keeps at a little distance before him, feigning to be incapable of flying; and just hopping up and falling down before him; but never going to so great a distance as to discourage her pursuer. At length having entirely drawn him away from her secret treasure, she at once takes wing and disappears.

The danger being over, and the dog withdrawn, she calls her young, who immediately assemble at her cry, and follow her. They are usually from ten to fifteen in a covey. A partridge will live from fifteen to seventeen years, if unmolested. Partridges, properly speaking, make no nest, being satisfied with laying their eggs upon the ground, where they find a little hay or straw. The eggs are of a greyish colour, with a yellowish cast, and have a pretty hard shell. There is a bird of this kind called the red partridge, which is rather larger than that above mentioned and perches upon trees. That which we have particularly described above, is what we are best acquainted with in

England

England, and always keeps upon the ground.

The places that partridges most delight in, are corn-fields, especially while the corn grows; for that is a safe retreat, where they remain undisturbed, and under which they usually breed. They frequent the same fields after the corn is cut down, and that with another intent; for they then feed on the corn that has fallen from the ears, and find a sufficient shelter for them under covert of the stalks, especially of those of wheat stubble. When the wheat-stubble is much trodden by men or beasts, they retire to the barley stubble, and will there hide themselves in coveys of ten or fifteen. When the winter comes on, and the stubble-fields are trodden down or ploughed up, they then retire to the upland meadows, where they lodge in the high grass, and among rushes; sometimes they resort to the low coppice-woods, especially if there are corn lands near them.

THE HUDSON'S-BAY PAR-
TRIDGE.

THIS partridge is not much unlike those in England with regard to the shape of the head, but its bill is shorter and blunter. It has small red combs over the eyes, and the shape of its body resembles that of a pidgeon, but it is considerably larger. When the snow is on the ground, they feed on the buds of poplar. They run like an English partridge, and in the summer they are nearly of the colour of our partridges; but in the winter they are white, excepting only the large tail feathers, which are tipped with black. They moult these white feathers in the spring, and resume the brown ones against the summer season.

THE MOUNTAIN PARTRIDGE
OF JAMAICA.

THE length of this bird, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, is ten inches, and the breadth, when the wings are extended, about sixteen. The head is small, and the bill like that of

a pigeon. The upper-part of the body is of a reddish purple-colour, the lower-part is lighter, and under the belly it is whitish. The iris of the eyes is yellow, and the eye-lids are of a beautiful red. The legs and feet are red, like those of pigeons, and are about two inches long. It feeds upon berries, and is usually found among the mountains. It generally makes its nest in low trees, with twigs placed transversely, and lined with hair and cotton, for the better preservation of the eggs, and that the young may repose upon a soft bed.

THE MOUNTAIN PARTRIDGE OF HERNANDEZ.

THIS is larger than our partridge, and the bill and feet are of a bright red colour. The whole body is cloathed with a mixture of brown, pale and dusky yellow. The wings underneath are of an ash-colour, but they are speckled above with tawny white and yellow spots.

There is another bird called the partridge of Damascus, which is smaller than the common partridge, though

the bill is longer. In other respects they strongly resemble each other.

The red partridge of Aldrovandus is about twice the size of those of our own country, being equal in magnitude to a common hen. It has a red bill and legs, and is spotted on the breast and sides like ours; but the head, neck, breast, and rump, are chiefly ash-colour. This bird is a stranger in England, but is to be met with in the islands of Jersey and Guernsey.

THE QUAIL.

THE quail is not above half the size of a partridge: the length is seven inches and an half, the breadth fourteen. The feathers of the head are black, edged with rusty brown: the crown of the head is divided by a pale yellow line; beginning at the bill, and extending to the back; above each eye there is another line of the same colour: the chin and throat are whitish: the breast is of a pale yellowish red, spotted with black. The scapular feathers, and those on the back, are marked with a long pale yellow line in the middle, and with iron-coloured and black

black bars on the sides. The coverts of the wings are of a reddish brown, elegantly barred with paler lines; bounded on each side with black. The tail, which consists of twelve short feathers, is barred with black, and very pale brownish red. The legs are of a palish hue. In its habits and nature it resembles all others of the poultry kind, except that it is a bird of passage.

When we consider the heavy manner of its flying, and its dearth of plumage in proportion to its corpulence, it appears surprizing that a bird, so apparently ill qualified for migration, should venture to take extensive journeys: but, however extraordinary, it is certainly a bird of passage. Bello-nius assures us that when he went from Rhodes to Alexandria, about autumn, several quails, flying from the north to the south, were taken in his ship; and sailing at spring time the contrary way, from south to the north, he observed them on their return, when many of them were taken in the same manner. This account is confirmed by the testimony of many others, who assert that they choose a north wind for these adventures; the south being very unfavoura-

favourable, as it retards their flight by moistening their plumage.

But though it is universally admitted that the quail is a bird of passage, it still remains a doubt whether they take such long journeys as Bellonius has made them perform. Some have lately asserted that it only migrates from one province of a country to another. In England, for instance, it flies from the inland countries, to those bordering on the sea, and remains there all the winter. If they are driven out of the stubble-fields or marshes by frost or snow, they retreat to the sea-side, take shelter among the weeds, and live on what the sea casts upon the shore. The time of their appearance upon the coasts of Essex, exactly coincides with their disappearance from the more internal parts of the kingdom. Mr. Pennant says, "They are birds of passage; some entirely quitting our island, and others shifting their quarters *:" It is therefore probable that the account which Bellonius has given us may be strictly true; and the assertions which others have made that they

* British Zoology, vol. I. page 210.

sometimes only migrate from one province of a country to another, may equally deserve to be credited.

The quail is not so prolific as the partridge; seldom laying more than six or seven eggs, which are whitish, marked with irregular rush-coloured spots. This bird is easily taken, and may be enticed any where by a call. Quail-fighting, among the Athenians, was a favourite amusement: they abstained from the flesh of this bird, deeming it unwholesome, as it was supposed to feed on hellebore; but they staked sums of money on them, as we do with regard to game-cocks, upon the success of the combat. At present, however, the courage of this bird is disregarded, but its flesh is considered as a very great delicacy.

OF BIRDS OF THE PIE KIND.

IN the class of the pie kind we shall marshal a numerous irregular tribe, variously armed, with different pursuits, appetites and manners; not formidably formed for war, though generally delighting in mischief; not usefully obedient, and yet without any determined
enmity

48 *Of BIRDS of the PIE KIND.*

enmity to the rest of their fellow tenants of the air. In short, under this class of birds we may arrange all that noisy, restless, chattering tribe, that, from the size of the raven down to that of the wood-pecker, flutter round our habitations, and, with the spirit of pilferers, make free with the fruits of human industry.

This is the class of birds which contributes the least to furnish out the pleasures, or supply the necessities of man. The falcon hunts for him, the poultry tribe supply his table with delicacies; and the sparrow race delight him with their warblings. The crane kind make a variety in his entertainments; and the tribe of ducks are not only delicate in their flesh, but many of them furnish valuable feathers. But, in the class of birds of the pie kind, the pigeon is almost the only one that is useful in any respect. Like faithless servants, they are fond of the neighbourhood of men, because they live chiefly by his labour; their business is to plunder in his absence, and their deaths make him no atonement for their depredations.

Of BIRDS of the PIE KIND. 49

But though this class is rather noxious than beneficial to man ; yet, with respect to each other, no class of birds are so well fitted for society : they are the most industrious, the most faithful, the most constant, and the most conunial. The rapacious kinds discard their young before they are able to struggle with adversity ; but the pie kind cherish them to the last. The poultry class are faithless and promiscuous in their amours ; but these are perfectly wedded, and preserve their faith inviolate. They live in harmony with each other, and transmit an unpolluted race to posterity. The male assists in the labours of building the nest, and frequently relieves his mate in the time of incubation, by taking her place in the nest while she yields to the earnest solicitations of danger. When the young of this class are excluded from the egg, the male and female are equally active in providing food for them.

These birds are as remarkable for their instincts, as for their capacity to receive instruction : cunning and archness is observable in the look of the whole tribe ; and ravens and crows are

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taught

taught to fetch and carry with the docility of a spaniel.

In this extensive class, however, it is not to be supposed that the manners are alike. The pigeon is gentle and serviceable to man; others are noxious, capricious, and noisy. But they all agree in a few general characters; in having hoarse voices, slender active bodies, and a facility of flight that baffles the boldest of the rapacious kinds in the pursuit.

THE RAVEN.

THE raven is larger than the carrion crow, or the rook, and is not only distinguished from them by its size, but by its bill being somewhat more hooked than those of the other two. It weighs about three pounds; it is two feet two inches in length, and four in breadth, when its wings are extended. The bill is strong and thick; and the colour of the whole bird is black, finely glossed with deep rich blue; except on the belly, which is dusky.

The raven is to be found in every region of the world; for, being strong and hardy, it is uninfluenced by the change

changes of the weather. It bears, with equal indifference, the heat of the line, or the cold of the polar countries. While other birds seem numbed with cold, or pining with famine, the raven is active and healthy; busily employed in prowling for prey, or sporting in the coldest atmosphere. Though *black as a raven* is proverbial, yet it is sometimes found of a pure white; owing perhaps to the rigorous climates of the north. This change is wrought upon the raven, as upon most other animals in that part of the world, where their robes, especially in winter, assume the colour of the country they inhabit.

The raven is capable of being taught to perform almost any thing within the compass of any bird's abilities. He may be instructed in the art of fowling like an hawk; and, like a spaniel, he may be taught to fetch and carry. He may indeed be taught to speak like a parrot; and Dr. Goldsmith assures us he can be taught to sing like a man. "I have heard," says he, "a raven sing the Black-joke with great distinctness, truth, and humour *."

* Hist. of the Earth, vol. V. p. 226.

Taken as a domestic bird, the raven has many qualities that render him extremely amusing. Active, curious, and impudent, he goes every where, pries into every thing, runs after the dogs, plays tricks with the poultry, and with great skill and address even gets into the good graces of the cook-maid; truly sensible of her ability to reward him for his attachment to her. By nature a glutton, and, by habit, a thief. Not confined to petty depredations on the pantry or the larder, like a miser he hoards what he can neither exhibit or enjoy. A ring, a tea-spoon, a piece of coin, or any glittering bauble, are always tempting baits to his avarice; these he will watch an opportunity to pilfer, and carry them to his magazine of curiosities.

The raven, in its wild state, is a voracious plunderer. He is not delicate in the choice of his food, but, whether his prey be living, or dead and putrid, he greedily falls to; and, after having sufficiently gorged himself, flies to acquaint his companions that they may participate of the spoil. If the carcase should happen to be already in the possession of a fox, a dog, or any animal

more

more powerful than himself, he sits at a little distance, an humble spectator till they are satisfied. If he can discover no carrion, which, from his exquisite scent he can smell at a vast distance, he then contents himself with fruits, insects, and the accidental produce of the dunghill.

Ravens usually build in trees, and lay five or six eggs, which are of a palish green colour, spotted with brown. They are very numerous in the environs of large cities or towns; and are held in the same sort of veneration as the vultures are in Egypt, and for the same reason; for devouring the carcasses and filth, which would otherwise prove a nuisance. But they do not always fix their retreat near towns; they often build in unfrequented places, and drive all other birds from their vicinity. They will not even suffer their young to remain in the same district, but oblige them to depart as soon as they are able to provide for themselves. Martin assures us, in his description of the Western Isles, that there are three little islands among the number, which are occupied by a pair of ravens each, that

will not suffer any other birds to reside among them.

A vulgar respect is paid to the raven, as being the bird appointed by heaven to feed the prophet Elijah, when he fled from the rage of Ahab *. The Romans, who thought this bird ominous, paid it the most profound veneration, from motives of fear. Linnæus informs us that the Swedes look upon ravens as sacred birds, and no person attempts to kill them there. In the south part of Sweden, they fly to a great height, when the weather is serene; at which time they have a very singular cry that may be heard at a vast distance.

Pliny informs us that a raven which had been kept in the temple of Castor, flew down into the shop of a taylor, who was highly pleased with the visit of his new acquaintance. The taylor taught him several tricks, and also to pronounce the name of the emperor Tiberius, and the whole royal family. He was beginning to grow rich from the presents he received of those who came to see this wonderful raven, till an envious neighbour killed the bird.

* 1 Kings, 17.

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and deprived the taylor of his future hopes of fortune. The Romans, however, punished the man for thus injuring the taylor; and honoured the raven with a magnificent funeral.

Of all birds, the raven is most remarkable for longevity. We cannot easily credit what Hesiod asserts, that a raven will live nine times as long as a man, but it is certain that some of them have been known to live an hundred years: indeed, if great exercise, and a good appetite is conducive to long-life, the raven enjoys both in a superlative degree.

The raven was consecrated to Apollo, because it was thought to have a natural instinct to foretel futurity. Ovid says, that the raven was once whiter than doves or swans; but that, on account of its immoderate loquacity, it was changed to black.

THE CROW.

THE crow resembles the raven in the form of its body, its appetites, its laying, and the manner of bringing up its young. It will feed on carrion, or any other filth, and when that is not to be obtained,

obtained, it contents itself with grain and insects. Like the raven, it will pick out the eyes of young lambs when they are just dropped. It only differs from that bird in being less bold, less docile, and less favoured by mankind. England produces more birds of this kind than any other country in Europe. They were grown so numerous, and thought so prejudicial to the farmer, in the time of Henry VIII. that they were considered as an evil worthy of parliamentary redress. An act passed in the twenty-fourth year of his reign for their destruction, in which rooks and choughs were also included. Every hamlet was to provide crow nets for ten years; and, during that space, all the inhabitants were obliged to assemble at certain times, to consult the properest method of extirpating them.

Though the crow abounds in England, yet it is so uncommon in Sweden, that Linnæus mentions it only as a bird that he once knew killed there. It lays about the same number of eggs as the raven; and they are of the same colour. Both of these birds are sometimes found white or pied. The length of the crow is about eighteen inches,
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the breadth two feet two inches, and the weight about twenty ounces.

THE ROOK.

IN its form, the rook differs but little from the carrion crow, but it is rather larger : the colours in each are the same, the plumage of both being glossed with a rich purple. What principally distinguishes the rook from the crow is the bill ; which, by frequently being thrust into the ground to fetch out grubs and earth-worms, is bare of feathers as far as the eyes, and appears of a whitish colour. This distinction is the more necessary to be pointed out, as the rook has but too frequently suffered for its similitude to the crow ; and thus an harmless bird, that has no carnivorous appetites, and feeds only upon corn and insects, has been destroyed for another that feeds upon carrion, and frequently makes great havock among young poultry. The rook, instead of being proscribed, should be treated as the farmer's friend, as it destroys his caterpillars, which would otherwise do incredible damage by eating the roots of the corn.

Rooks

Rooks are sociable birds, living in vast flocks: they build in woods and forests in the neighbourhood of man, and sometimes make choice of groves in the middle of large towns or cities, for the place of their retreat and security. We had an instance of this even in the metropolis of England: not many years ago they formed a colony in the lofty trees in the Middle-Temple, where they passed as inoffensive a life as the other inhabitants of the Temple of the black robe. In these aerial cities they establish a kind of legal constitution, and exclude all intruders, none being suffered to build among them but acknowledged natives of the place. At the commencement of spring, the rooks begin to build their nests; one bringing materials, while the other watches the building, lest it should be plundered by its brethren. All the old inhabitants, however, are already provided with nests; that which served them for years before, requires only a little trimming and dressing, to make it answer all the purposes of a new habitation. The young ones indeed are unprovided with a nest, and are obli-

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ged to build one as well as they are able. The male and the female, upon this occasion, pass several days in attentively examining the trees of the grove, before they fix upon a branch which seems proper for their purpose. The situation being pitched upon, they begin to gather the materials for their nest; the outside consisting chiefly of sticks, and the inside is usually lined with fibrous roots; the whole being regularly and substantially disposed. Sometimes the young couple give offence by making choice of a place too near the mansion of an older pair; a quarrel consequently ensues, and the old ones are always victorious.

Thus expelled, the young couple deliberate and examine as before, and, having taken care to keep their due distance, they again begin to build, and, in the space of three or four days, they usually complete their nest. Though they have frequent skirmishes, all hostilities are at an end as soon as the female begins to lay: not one of the whole grove, that treated her roughly but a little before, will now attempt
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to molest her. Though native rooks are sometimes treated with severity by each other; yet, if a foreign rook should attempt to make himself a denizen of their society, he must expect no favour; the whole grove would immediately be up in arms against him, and drive him from the premises of which they had possessed themselves.

Rooks, in some countries, are considered as a benefit, in others a nuisance; but they are generally supposed to do as much service by destroying noxious insects, as they do injury by consuming the grain of the husbandman. They lay the same number of eggs as the crow, and they are of the same colour, but smaller.

THE CALAO, OR HORNED INDIAN RAVEN.

THIS bird exceeds the common raven, both in size and in its habits of depredation: but it differs from all other birds in its beak, which, by its length and curvature at the end, appears designed for rapine: it has a kind of horn projecting from the top, somewhat resembling a second bill, which
gives

gives the bird a very formidable appearance. The horn springs from the forehead, and grows to the upper-part of the bill. Its bulk is considerable, and near the fore-head is about four inches broad : it has some resemblance of the horn of the rhinoceros, but is more crooked at the tip. Were the body of this bird proportioned to the head, the calao would exceed the vulture or the eagle in magnitude. The breast and the whole body is black, but the tail is greenish, and the head of a dark yellow, without feathers : below the neck the rehangs a kind of a bag, not unlike that of a turkey-cock. These birds, even in the East-Indies, are esteemed a great rarity, and sell for a considerable sum.

THE ROYSTON CROW.

THE bill of this species agrees in shape with that of the rook, and they both have a similitude in their manners ; both flying in flocks, and both feeding on insects. The Royston crow is a bird of passage in Great-Britain ; visiting that country in the beginning of winter, and leaving it with the

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wood-cocks. It is found in both the inland and maritime parts of our country, and, in the latter, they feed on shell-fish. They breed in Sweden, and usually build in alders. They lay, in general, four eggs. Belon, Gesner, and Aldrovandus agree that this is a bird of passage in their respective countries; that it visits high mountains in the breeding season, and descends into the plains on the approach of winter.

The length of this species is about twenty-two inches, the breadth twenty-three inches, and the weight twenty-two ounces. The head, the under-side of the neck, and the wings, are black, finely glossed with blue: the back, breast, belly, and upper part of the neck, are of a pale ash-colour: the legs are black, and smaller than those of the rook. These are the only sort of crow which are found in Shetland, though we cannot ascertain whether they breed in any other of the British isles.

THE CORNISH CHOUGH.

THIS bird is about seventeen inches in length, and thirty-three inches in breadth,

breadth, when the wings are extended. It weighs twelve or thirteen ounces. It is almost as large as a crow, and nearly of the same shape. The bill, legs and feet are red, but the feathers all over the body are black. It is remarkable for the unusual softness of its voice, when it applies for meat to those who often feed or caress it; and is equally remarkable for its frightful shriek at the approach of any thing strange. It is commonly kept about the houses in Cornwall, where it becomes tame, like ravens or magpies, and is equally mischievous; delighting in stealing money, or any shining bauble it happens to meet with. In its wild state, it is very apprehensive of danger, and builds its nest upon inaccessible cliffs, and in the middle of the steepest rocks. When tamed it is very amusing, docile, regular, and constant to its hour of meals. It goes early to roost, and generally takes shelter in some unfrequented place in tempestuous weather; but in serene weather, it gets upon the tops of houses, or struts about the ground in a very stately manner. Aldrovandus supposed this bird to be peculiar to the Alps, but it is found

in Crete, Ireland, and Wales, as well as in the county of Cornwall in England,

THE JACK-DAW.

THE length of this bird is thirteen inches, the breadth twenty-eight inches, and the weight nine ounces. The head is large in proportion to its body; which, Mr. Willoughby says, argues him to be ingenious and crafty. The forehead is black, the hind part of the head ash-coloured; the breast and belly of the same colour, but more obscure. The rest of the plumage is black, slightly glossed with blue: the feet and bill are black. He is docile and loquacious. He builds in steeples, old castles, and high rocks, and lays five or six eggs in season. Jack-daws flock together, and feed on insects, grain, seeds, and fruits. They breed in England, and many other countries of Europe.

THE MAGPIE.

THE marks of this species are well known, that it would be impertinent to give a particular description
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Were its other accomplishments equal to its beauty, few of the feathered tribe could be put into competition with it. Its black, its white, its green, and purple, with the rich and gilded combination of the glosses on its tail, are elegant beyond description ; but it is restless, vain, loud, and quarrelsome, and an unwelcome intruder every where ; embracing every opportunity of doing mischief.

The bill of the magpie resembles that of the butcher-bird, having a sharp process near the end of the upper-chap. It also resembles it in the shortness of the wings, and the form of the tail, each feather shortening from the two middlemost. It agrees still more in its food, living upon worms, insects, and small birds. It will even destroy young chickens when it finds them separated from the hen. It lays six or seven eggs, which are of a pale green colour spotted with brown.

The magpie has the insolence to tease the largest animals, when its insults can be offered with security. They are frequently seen perched upon the back of an ox or a sheep, pecking up the insects that are to be found there ;

chattering and tormenting the poor animal at the same time. They make diligent search after the nests of birds, and if the parent escapes, his mansion is plundered of the eggs. Scarce any food comes amiss to it. Like the raven, it feeds on carrion; like the rook, it delights in grain; and, like the cuckoo, it devours the eggs of birds. It is more provident, however, than most other gluttons; for when satisfied for the present, it treasures up the remainder of the feast for another occasion: even in a tame state, it will conceal its food when it has done eating, and, when its appetite returns, it will return to the secret hoard.

The nest of the magpie is usually placed in the middle of some hawthorn-bush, or on the top of an high tree. The place, however, is always found as inaccessible as possible to men, and the nest is curiously fenced above, to defend it from the various enemies of the air. The kite, the sparrow-hawk, and the crow, are to be guarded against; the magpie having sometimes plundered their nests, naturally supposes they will embrace the first opportunity to retaliate. To prevent this, it builds a nest with

with surprizing labour and ingenuity. The body of the nest is composed of hawthorn-branches, with the thorns sticking outwards. It is lined with fibrous roots, wool, and grass, and then ingeniously plaistered round with mud or clay. Above the nest, a canopy is raised, composed of the sharpest thorns, so curiously interwoven as to admit of no entrance but at the door; that aperture being just large enough to permit egress and regress to the owners. In this fortified mansion the male and female hatch and bring up their brood with security, sheltered from all attacks but those of the adventurous school-boy; who often pays too dear a price for the eggs, or young birds, by the wounds he receives from the pointed thorns.

In its domestic state, the magpie is a more cunning, and consequently a more docile bird, than any other usually taken into keeping. Many of those who teach it to speak, have a ridiculous custom of cutting its tongue, which only torments the poor animal, without being of the smallest service. Though its speaking is sometimes very distinct, its sounds are too sharp to be an exact imitation

imitation of the human voice. The length of this bird is about eighteen inches, the breadth twenty-four inches, and the weight about nine ounces. There are many of these birds in Sweden, and they are found in many other countries. They begin to pair in February, and lay their eggs very early. It is difficult to distinguish the cock magpie from the hen, the colours are so exactly alike.

THE JAY.

THE jay is one of the most beautiful of the British birds. The bill is strong, thick, and black, and about a quarter of an inch long. The tongue is black, thin, and cloven at the tip. The forehead is white, streaked with black : the head is covered with very long feathers, which it can erect into a crest at pleasure. The neck, back, breast and belly are of a faintish purple, dashed with grey ; and the covert feathers of the wings are of the same colour. The greater covert feathers of the wings are most beautifully barred with a lovely blue, black, and white. The tail consists of twelve black feathers,

thers, and the feet are of a pale brown. It lays five or six eggs, which are of a dullish white, mottled with a pale brown. Like the magpie, it feeds upon fruits, and in the summer is very injurious to gardens, being a great devourer of pease and cherries. In the autumn and winter they feed on acorns, and, according to Dr. Kramer *, they will kill small birds. Their native note is very disagreeable, but they are very docile, and may be taught to imitate the human voice.

The length of this bird is thirteen inches, the breadth twenty inches and an half, and the weight between six and seven ounces.

THE CHATTERER.

THE chatterer is a native of Germany, and is somewhat smaller than the jay. It is variegated with a beautiful mixture of colours ; red, ash-colour, brown, chesnut, and yellow ; but what distinguishes this from all other birds, are the horny appendages from the tips of seven of the lesser quill feathers, which have the colour and

* Kram. Elench. 335,

gloss of the best sealing-wax. It lives in the woods, and feeds on juniper and other berries. This bird is also found in North-America.

THE ROLLER.

THIS is a very beautiful bird: the head is green, the breast and belly of a whitish blue; and the wings are variegated with black, white, and a delightful blue. But it may be distinguished from all others, by a sort of naked tubercles or warts near the eyes; by the shape of its tail, the outer feathers of which are longer than the rest; and by its toes, which are cloven quite to the bottom.

THE BLUE JAY.

THE shape of this bird is not unlike the common European jay, except that the tail is longer, and the feathers of unequal lengths; those in the middle being the longest. The bill is black; the feathers on the top of the head are long and blue, and can at pleasure be raised into a crest. The sides of the head, and part of the throat are white, fur-

surrounded with a black line ; and above each eye there is a white spot. The lower part of the neck behind, and the back, are of a blue, inclining to purple ; the upper sides of the wings and tail are of a very fine blue, and the lower part of the back and rump are of the same colour. The tail feathers, except the two middlemost, are tipped with white, and barred with three black bars. The rest of the quills next the back, and the first row of the feathers above them, are tipped with white, and elegantly barred with black. The breast is of a brownish red, inclining to rose colour, which gradually becomes white towards the belly. The legs, feet, and thighs are of a dusky brown. It inhabits Carolina, and has a more harmonious note than our European jays. The colours of the female are the same as those of the male, except that they are somewhat duller.

THE BENGAL JAY.

THIS is larger than the English jay, and has an ash-coloured bill. The upper part of the head is blue, and the back and breast are a mixture of light brown

brown and red, with a little cast of a lead colour. The back is of a muddy dark green, and the wings, belly, and thighs are blue. That part of the tail next the rump, as well as at the extremity, is of a dark blue ; but the middle part is paler and whiter. The legs and feet are of a yellowish brown, with black open claws.

THE LITTLE INDIAN PIE.

THE bill of this bird is of a blackish colour towards the point, but the angles at the corner of the mouth are of an orange colour. The head, neck, breast, back, rump, and covert feathers of the wings, are of a deep black, with a shining gloss, changeable from blue to purple. The quill feathers of the wings, and those on the ridge next the breast, are of a dusky brown ; but a few of the middle quills are white, as well as the first row of coverts just above. The belly and thighs are white ; the middle feathers of the tail are black, and somewhat longer than those on the sides. The legs and feet are of a dark brown, and the toes have strong claws. This is a native of Bengal.

THE





Guinea Fowl



Toucan

Huppo

THE RED-BEAKED TOUCAN.

THE shape of this bird resembles that of the jack-daw, and the size is nearly the same; with a very large head to support its monstrous bill; which from the angles of its mouth to its point, is six inches and an half, and the breadth in the thickest part exceeds two inches. Its thickness near the head is one inch and a quarter; and it is a little arched or rounded along the top of the upper chap, the under side being round also. The whole of the bill is extremely light, and almost as thin as parchment. The upper chap is of a bright yellow, except on each side, which is of a beautiful red; as is also the lower chap, except at the base, which inclines to a purple. There is a black line of separation all round the base of the bill, between that and the head: the nostrils are placed in the upper part of the bill, and are almost covered with feathers; which has occasioned some writers to say, that the toucan is without nostrils. Round the eyes, on each side of the head, is a space of bluish skin, destitute of feathers, above which the

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head is black, except a white spot on each side joining to the base of the upper chap. The hind part of the neck, the back, wings, tail, belly and thighs are black. The under side of the head, the throat, and the upper part of the breast, are white. There are a parcel of red feathers, in the form of a new moon with its horns upwards, between the white on the breast, and the black on the belly. The covert feathers under the tail are red, and those above are yellow. The legs, feet, and claws are ash-coloured, and the toes are disposed like those of parrots, two before, and two behind.

Travellers assure us, that notwithstanding this bird is furnished with so formidable a beak, it is very gentle and inoffensive, and so easily tamed, that it will sit and hatch its young in houses. They also say, it feeds principally on pepper, which it devours very greedily, gorging itself in such a manner that it excludes its crude and unconcocted food. Whatever credit this account may deserve, it is certain that the toucan lives principally upon a vegetable diet; and in a domestic state, it is seen to prefer such food to any other. Pozzo, who

bred

red one of these birds tame, says it leaped up and down, moved its tail, and cried with a voice resembling that of a magpie. Any thing upon which parrots fed, seemed to be agreeable to it, but it was particularly fond of grapes; and, if they were plucked off by one, and thrown into the air, it would catch them with great dexterity before they fell to the ground. Pozzo further informs us that its bill was hollow and extremely light, and consequently it had but little strength as a weapon which appeared so formidable: but its tongue seemed to assist the efforts of this unwieldy machine. It was long, thin, and flat, and moved up and down; the animal often extending it five or six inches from the bill. It was of a flesh colour, curiously fringed on each side with very small filaments, exactly resembling a feather.

It appears evident that this long tongue is stronger than the thin hollow sheath that contains it. Probably the sheath is only a kind of sheath for this singular instrument, which is used by the toucan, not only in making itself a nest, but also in obtaining its provision. It is, however, an absolute certainty

that it builds its nest in the holes of trees, which have been previously made for that purpose ; and it can hardly be supposed that so feeble a bill could penetrate such hard materials.

The toucan has not only men, birds, and serpents to guard against, but also a numerous tribe of monkies, still more prying, mischievous, and hungry than all the rest. It therefore scoops out its nest in the hollow of some tree, leaving a hole just large enough to go in and out at. There it sits, guarding the entrance with its great beak ; and if the monkey, prompted by curiosity, or from any other motive, ventures to visit it, he usually receives such a welcome from the toucan, that he is glad to escape with safety. This bird inhabits only the warm climates of South-America, where it is much esteemed for the delicacy of its flesh, and for the beauty of its plumage. The feathers of the breast are particularly admired ; and the Indians pluck off the skin of this part, which, when dry, they glue to their cheeks : this they consider as an irresistible addition to their beauty, and every woman is happy in the possession of it.

The

The use of the extraordinary beak of this bird is for stripping off the pepper, and fruits of a like sort from the stalk ; and this all of the kind do with surprising quickness.

When we contemplate the bird creation, the prodigious variety in their bills, wings, and claws, cannot fail to strike us ; nor can we imagine, that all these different forms are no more than the mere play of nature, when we see how exquisitely designed and accommodated is every part of the creation. A nearer and more accurate survey will tend abundantly to convince us, that all these various parts in different creatures are calculated for the accommodations of their wants. They are a set of instruments proportioned, by the all-wise and original designer, to the nature of their labours and manner of life. And he who wants to be satisfied of this, will do well only to consider a few instances, which will give him an additional proof of God's care of his creation, and of his consummate wisdom, which planned and which perfected this amazing scheme of things. More striking instances cannot be produced, than this before us, from which let the

speculift turn to the little hard-beaked sparrow, and other small birds, which live upon feeds; to the wood-cock, the snipe, the curlew, which extract their aliment from the earth; the wood-pecker, whose horny bill is employed in picking insects from the hard wood; to the heron, the stork, the swan, the goose, and he will be assured, that these too, however minute, proclaim a wise and good Creator.

THE PIE OF THE CARIBBEE ISLANDS.

THIS beautiful bird has a kind of a white hood on its head, spotted and striped with black lines, which extend from the bill to the back, where the feathers are tawny as far as the rump, which is quite yellow. It has a blue neck, with a white circle in the middle. It has a large tail, consisting of eight blue feathers, striped with white, two of which are nine or ten inches longer than the rest. The small feathers on the wings are tawny, striped with black lines; the large are a mixture of green and blue, the belly is entirely white, and the feet are red. These pies are shyer

hyer than those of Europe, hardly permitting a man to look at them while they are on the trees.

The Indian chattering pie is like the common jay, but smaller.

The African pie, seen near the Cape of Good-Hope, is about the size of the common jay, and has a red bill and red feet. It is entirely black, except a white circle round the neck. It frequents tall trees, and the tops of high rocks, and is particularly fond of wild almonds. It is a docile bird, and may be taught to speak like a parrot.

THE GREEN WOOD-PECKER.

THERE are many kinds of this bird, and many varieties in each kind. They form large colonies in the forests of almost every part of the world. The wisdom of Providence in the admirable contrivance of the fitness of the parts of animals to their respective nature, cannot be better illustrated than from this genus.

Wood-peckers feed entirely on insects; and their principal action is that of climbing up and down the bodies or boughs of trees. For the purpose of procuring

procuring their food, they are provided with a long slender tongue, armed with a sharp bony end, barbed on each side, which, by the assistance of a curious apparatus of muscles, they can exert at pleasure, darting it to a great length into the clefts of the bark, transfixing and drawing out the insects that lurk there. Such is the instrument with which this bird is provided; and this is the manner in which this instrument is employed. When a wood-pecker discovers a rotten hollow tree, where there are worms, ant's-eggs, or insects, it instantly prepares for its operations. Resting by its strong claws, and leaning on the thick feathers of its tail, it bores with its sharp strong beak, till it discloses the whole internal habitation. Then, either from its satisfaction at the sight of the prey, or with intent to alarm the insect colony, it sends forth a loud cry, which creates terror and confusion among the whole tribe, and puts them immediately in motion; while the bird luxuriously feasts upon them at leisure, darting its tongue with unerring certainty, and devouring the whole brood.

The depredations of the wood-pecker, however, are not confined solely to trees, but it sometimes descends to the ground to try its fortune at an ant-hill; where it is not so secure of prey as in the former case, though the numbers are much greater. They usually lie too deep for the birds to come at them, but they supply by stratagem the defect of their power. The wood-pecker pecks at their hills, in order to call them abroad; and, thrusting out its long red tongue, which resembles their usual prey, the ants come in crouds to settle upon it: the bird, watching a favourable opportunity, withdraws its tongue at a jerk, and devours the devourers.

The wood-pecker makes cavities in trees to form its nest, and to lay in. This is performed with the bill, though some have erroneously affirmed that the animal uses its tongue, as a gimblet, to bore with. For this purpose, the wood-pecker chooses those trees that are decayed, or those which have soft wood, like beech, elm, and poplar. In these it can, with great facility, make holes that are exactly round: but as it is delicate in its choice, it usually makes
several

several before any one will give it entire satisfaction. When it has made one that it approves of, it nestles and brings up its young in it; and those which it has deserted are taken possession of by other birds, which are not such expert borers, and are less delicate in their choice. The jay and the starling sometimes lay their eggs in those holes; and bats are frequently known to occupy them. School-boys, who have thrust in their hands with certain hopes of plucking out a bird's egg, have sometimes, to their great mortification, had their fingers bitten at the bottom.

The nest of the wood-pecker has neither feathers, straw, nor any other lining; its eggs are deposited in the hole, without any thing except the heat of the parent's body to keep them warm. Their number is usually five or six, which are always oblong, and of a semi-transparent white.

The green-wood-pecker is about thirteen inches long, twenty-one inches broad, and weighs six ounces and an half. The bill is dusky, triangular, and near two inches long; it is exceeding strong and hard, and formed like a wedge

wedge at the end. Dr. Derham observes that a neat ridge runs along the top, as if an artist had designed it for strength and beauty. The eyes are surrounded with black, beneath which there is a crimson mark in the males, though not in the females. The back, neck, and lesser coverts of the wings, are green; and the rump is of a pale yellow. The greater quill feathers are dusky, spotted with white on each side. The tail consists of ten stiff feathers, the ends of which are generally broken, as the birds rest on them in climbing: the tips of them are black, and the other parts are alternately barred with dusky and deep green. The whole of the under part of the body is of a very pale green; and the thighs are marked with dusky lines. The legs, which are of a palish green, are short and strong; the thighs are very muscular; two of their toes point forwards, and two backwards.

This bird is also called the rain fowl, because it is supposed to foretel rain, when it makes a greater noise than usual. Brisson, however, calls it *Le Picverd* *.

* Brisson Av. iv. 9.

THE GREAT SPOTTED WOOD-PECKER.

THIS bird is about nine inches in length, sixteen inches in breadth, and weighs two ounces and three quarters. The bill is of a black horn-colour, and the forehead of a pale buff-colour. The crown of the head is of a glossy black, and the hind part is marked with a rich deep crimson spot. The cheeks are white, bounded beneath by a black line, which passes from the corner of the mouth, and furrounds the hind part of the head. The neck is encircled with a black colour; and the throat and breast are of a yellowish white. The back, rump, coverts of the tail, and lesser coverts of the wings, are black. The quill feathers are black, each web being elegantly marked with round white spots. The four middle feathers of the tail are black, the next are tipped with dirty yellow, and the bottoms of the two outermost are black. The legs are of a lead-colour. The colours of the female agree with those of the male, except that the female

wants

wants that beautiful crimson spot on the head.

THE LESSER SPOTTED WOOD-PECKER.

THIS resembles the former in colour and shape, but is considerably smaller, and hardly weighs an ounce. Its length from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, is only six inches, and its breadth, when the wings are extended, is eleven inches. The forehead is of a dirty white : the crown of the head (in the male only) is of a beautiful crimson : the cheeks and sides of the neck are white : the hind part of the head and neck, and the coverts of the wings, are black. The back is barred with black and white ; the breast and belly are of a dirty white, and the vent feathers of a bright crimson. The crown of the head (in the female) is white, and the feet are of a lead-colour : it has all the characters and habits of the larger kind, but is not so frequently seen.

THE GUINEA WOOD-PECKER.

A traveller who walks into the forests of Guinea and Brasil, among the first strange objects that excites his curiosity, is struck with the multitude of bird's nests hanging at the extremity of the branches of trees. Many birds build in this manner, but the chief of them are of the wood-pecker kind; and indeed, there is not, in the whole history of nature, a more singular instance of the sagacity of those little animals, in protecting themselves against those enemies from which they apprehend danger. In cultivated countries, the chief caution of the feathered tribe, is to conceal their nests from the invasions of man, considering him as their greatest enemy. But in these remote and solitary forests, where man is seldom seen, he cannot possibly be dreaded. Regardless how much the nest is exposed to general notice, the parent is satisfied if it be out of the reach of those rapacious creatures that live by robbery and surprize. The monkey and the snake are almost the only enemies it has to fear; and, to guard a
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Woodpeckers of Guinea & Brasil





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gainst them, it builds its nest upon the most outward branches of a tall tree, such as the banana, or the plantane. On one of those immense trees are seen the strangest assemblage of creatures that can be imagined. Some particular tribe of monkies inhabit the top, which drive off all others that attempt to associate with them. About the trunk of the tree are twined great numbers of the larger kind of snakes, waiting till some unwary animal comes within the sphere of their activity; and these extraordinary nests hang in great abundance at the edges of the tree, inhabited by birds of the most delightful plumage.

They usually form the nest in the following manner: when the time of incubation approaches, they fly about in search of a kind of mofs peculiar to those countries. It is a fibrous substance resembling hair, which may be easily moulded into any form. This the little wood-pecker glues, by some viscous substance gathered in the forest, to the extremest branch of a tree; then, adding fresh materials to those already procured, a nest is formed, that hangs like a pouch from the point of

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the branch. On one side there is a hole to enter at, and all the interior parts are lined with the finer fibres of the same substance.

These hanging nests are made by some other birds with still superior art. A small bird of the gros-beak kind in the Philippine Islands, forms its nest in such a manner that there is no opening but from the bottom where the bird enters, and goes up as it were through a funnel, like a chimney, till it comes to the real door of the nest, which lies on one side, and only opens into the funnel. Some glue their nests to the leaf of the banana-tree. But they are built with the same precautions to guard the young against the depredations of monkeys and serpents, which abound in every tree. The nest hangs secure, and these spoilers can only gaze upon them, while the bird flies in and out without danger or molestation.

THE BIRD OF PARADISE.

THERE are of this species nine sorts, according to some naturalists. Our countryman, Mr. Edwards, describes three. The greater bird of Paradise

the king of the birds of Paradise; and the golden bird of Paradise.

That these birds have no feet was believed generally some years since, but it is now well known that they have feet and legs as well as others, and those, says Ray, “not short, small, or feeble ones, but sufficiently great and long, armed with crooked talons, being the members of birds of prey.”

The bird of Paradise, described by Moregrave, is of the size of a swallow, with a small head and eyes, a sharp beak, thick feet, and crooked claws; the feathers about the beak are soft as silk, green and brown above, and black below: the top of the neck is of a gold colour, underneath the neck is a mixture of gold and green: the breast is of a deep brown, and the rest of the body, wings, and tail, of a beautiful brownish colour: the long feathers on the sides are of a gold colour near their rise, but in other parts of a whitish yellow.

The king of the birds of Paradise, mentioned by Clusius, is the least of the species; the wings are much longer than the body: the beak is white, and an inch in length; the lower part is covered with a sort of red silky down,

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as well as the fore-part of his head : the middle part of the eyes is full of black specks : the feathers on the neck and breast are of a deep black, and have the resemblance of silk : the back, wings, and tail, are all of the same colour, that is, of a dusky yellow : the feathers which cover the belly are white, but near the wings black : the quills are slender and black, and at the end rolled into a sort of ball : on one side of them are long, fine, shaggy hairs : the upper side is of a shining deep green, but they are of a dusky yellow underneath.

Mr. Edwards's king of the birds of Paradise differs from that of Clusius. The beak and thighs of his are white, though the lower part of the thighs above the knees inclines to brown.

The golden bird of Paradise has a gold coloured neck as well as beak : the feet and toes are yellow : the breast and back of a pale orange colour : and the large feathers of the wing and tail are of a reddish orange.

A bird of Paradise, different from those which we have described, is found, now and then, in the island of Ceylon,
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in the East-Indies ; but no writer has given a particular description of it.

Linnaeus mentions only two of these birds in his system. Not. 1, *Paradisæa*, with two long threads at the tail, which are feathers at the points, and rolled up. 2. *Paradisæa*, with feathers at the sides longer than the body, and two long bristly feathers in the tail.

The reflective reader will note, in every instance produced, the great beauty and variety of the Creator's works, which all unite to attest his power, his goodness and wisdom.

The bird of Paradise, which is a native of the Molucca islands, exceeds in beauty all others of the pie kind : they are also found in great plenty in the island of Aro. There, in the delightful and spicy woods of the country, do these beautiful creatures appear in large flocks ; so that the groves, which produce the richest spices, produce also the finest birds. The inhabitants are so sensible of the pleasures these afford, that they call them God's birds, as being superior to all others that he has created. They are called by some the swallows of Ternate, from their rapid flight, and from their being
con-

continually on the wing in pursuit of insects, which are their usual prey.

The country, where they are bred, having its tempestuous season, when rain and thunder continually disturb the atmosphere, few of them are then to be seen. At such times it is imagined they fly to other countries, where their food is to be found in greater abundance; for, like swallows, they have their stated times of return. In the beginning of August, vast numbers of them are seen flying together; and, as the inhabitants suppose, follow their king, who is distinguished from the rest by the lustre of his plumage, and that respect and homage which is paid him. They perch, in the evening, upon the highest trees in the forest; generally making choice of one which bears a red berry, upon which they sometimes feed when they have scarcity of other food.

The natives, who employ themselves in killing these birds, in order to sell them to the Europeans, usually hide themselves in the trees where they resort; and, having concealed themselves in a kind of bower, which they form of the branches, they shoot at them with

reedy

reedy arrows; and, if they happen to kill the king, as they call him, they seldom fail of taking the greatest part of the flock.

THE PIED BIRD OF PARADISE.

THIS bird has a blackish bill like that of a duck, and at the base of the upper-chap there are stiff black hairs. The head and neck are black, with a crest of loose slender feathers bending backwards. The whole of the body is white, except the wings: the prime quills are black, except towards the roots, where they are whitish. The quills next the back are black in the middle, and white on the edges: the lesser covert feathers of the wings are white, with a long dash of black on each feather. The tail is nearly as long as that of a magpie, and the two middle feathers are about ten inches longer than the rest. The tail feathers are white, and the shortest of them are tipped and bordered with a fringe of black. The shafts of the tail feathers are black, except so much of the long feathers as shoot beyond the shorter. The feet resemble those of the king's-fisher.

This

This bird is an inhabitant of the East-Indies.

THE CUCKOO.

THE note of the cuckoo is known to all the world, but the history and nature of the bird itself remains still in obscurity. It has been asserted that it devours its parent, and that it changes its nature with the season, and becomes a sparrow-hawk; but these fables are now sufficiently refuted. Still, however, it remains a secret where it resides in winter, or how it provides for its supply during that season.

The claw and bill of the cuckoo are smaller and much weaker than those of other rapacious birds. This singular bird, which is somewhat less than a pigeon, shaped like a magpie, and of a greyish colour, is distinguished from all other birds, by its round prominent nostrils on the surface of the bill. The lower part of the body is of a yellowish colour, with black transverse lines under the throat, and on the top of the breast. The head, the upper-part of the body, and the wings, are beautifully marked with tawny and black tran-

Cuckoo



Birds of Paradise





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transparent stripes, and there are a few white spots on the top of the head. The ends of the feathers on the rump and the bottom of the back are white, and the inner edge of the outward part of the wings are painted with large transverse white spots. The tail is pretty long, with black and tawny streaks running across it, and white spots on the outward edges of the feathers. It consists of eight feathers, of which two in the middle are much the longest, and those on each side grow regularly shorter. The legs, which are very short, are cloathed with feathers down to the feet, which are weak and yellowish, and the claws are nearly of the same colour. It has four toes, two of which are placed before, and two behind; the more inward of these are shorter than the rest. Its mouth is large, and yellowish on the inside.

Having disappeared all the winter, the cuckoo discovers itself in our country early in the spring, by its well-known voice. He is indeed silent for some little time after his arrival: his note is a call to love, and is used only by the male, who is usually perched on a dead tree, or a bare bough, repeating

ing his song, which he loses as soon as the amorous season is over. The note of this bird is so uniform, that his name in all languages, seems to have been derived from it; and in all countries it is used in the same reproachful sense.

This reproach probably arose from this bird making use of the nest of another to deposit its eggs in; leaving the care of its young to another of the feathered tribe. A water-wagtail, or hedge-sparrow generally performs the office of nurse to the young cuckoos; and if they happen to be hatched at the same time with the genuine offspring, they quickly destroy them by over-laying them, as their growth is soon so superior.

From the chearful voice of the cuckoo, the farmer may be instructed in the real advancement of the year. Human calendars we know are fallible; but, as the note of this bird depends upon a certain temperature of the air, these feathered guides point out to us the true commencement of the season. The note of the cuckoo is pleasant, though uniform; and, from an association of ideas, seldom occurs to the memory, without reminding us
of

of the sweets of summer. This bird usually lays one egg, which is speckled, and about the size of a black-bird's.

When the cuckoo is fledged and fitted for flight, it does not long attend its supposed parent : as its appetites for insect food encreases, it cannot expect supply by imitating its little instructor ; it therefore takes a friendly leave, and seldom offers any violence to its nurse. But all the little birds consider the young cuckoo as an enemy, and revenge the causes of their kind by their repeated insults. All the smaller birds form the train of its pursuers ; but the grey-neck is the most active in the chase ; and from thence has been considered by many as the provider and attendant of the cuckoo. But it is well known that it follows with no friendly intention ; it only attends as an insulter or spy, to warn the little warblers of the predations of the cuckoo.

Such are the habits of this bird while it continues amongst us ; but at the approach of winter it totally disappears, and its passage cannot be traced to any other country. Some imagine it lives concealed in hollow trees, and others that it passes into

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warmer climates. Which of these opinions is true, is very uncertain, as nothing has been related on either side that can be absolutely relied on. The most probable conjecture is, that as quail and woodcocks shift their habitation in winter, so also does the cuckoo: but whither it retires, or if any person has ever seen it on its journey, we are at loss to determine.

It has been doubted whether these birds are carnivorous; but Reaumur who bred up several, informs us that they would not feed upon bread or corn, flesh and insects being their favourite provision; but insects seemed to afford them the most agreeable repast and they greedily devoured them. Their voracity indeed is not to be wondered at, their stomach being so capacious, as to reach from the back-bone to the vent. Nevertheless, they are not to be considered as birds of prey, being destitute of the necessary strength and courage. They are naturally weak and timid, as appears by their flying from small birds, by which they are every where pursued.

The length of the cuckoo is fourteen inches, the breadth twenty-five inches

and the weight about five ounces. The young birds are brown, mixed with black, and, in that state, some authors have described them as old ones.

In different parts of the world, there are various kinds of this bird, differing both in size and colour. Brisson enumerates twenty-eight sorts of them. He mentions one of Brasil, as making a most horrible noise in the forests, which must be a very different note from that by which our cuckoo is distinguished. Linnæus informs us that the male and female cuckoo resemble each other in colour, except that the male has the corners of the mouth yellow, as in young sparrows; and the head, back, and neck, are of an ash-colour, without any grey spots; and that the belly is darker. The flesh of cuckoos is seldom eaten, for it is not easily obtained; and perhaps it may not generally be thought fit for that purpose; but those who have tasted it, affirm that the young cuckoo is a most delicious morsel. The Italians, in particular, are extravagantly fond of it.

The cuckoo was consecrated to Jupiter. The fable says, that God, having made the air extremely cold, trans-

formed himself into a cuckoo, and went to repose himself on the bosom of Juno, who received him willingly : a poetic figure, which intimates the success of an intrigue. Mount Thornax in Peloponnesus, where this adventure happened, was from that time called the Mountain of the Cuckoo.

THE PARROT.

OF all foreign birds, the parrot is the best known among us, as it unites the greatest beauty with the greatest docility. It imitates the human voice better than any other bird ; the raven being too hoarse in its speech, and the jay and magpie too shrill. It is astonishing with what ease the parrot is taught to speak ; we are assured from good authority, that one of these birds was taught to repeat a whole sonnet from Petrarch. Not many years ago, a gentleman in the city of London became possessed of two parrots, each having received a very different education from the other. One had received his tuition from a cook-maid in a gentleman's kitchen, and the other had obtained his instruction in a very religi-

ous family, where the morning and evening services were regularly repeated every day. The former, probably from hearing the cook frequently make use of the same expression, often cried out in a distinct and audible voice, *The d—l take my mistress!* The latter, from attending to the responses which he had heard in the religious family, always made responses to the imprecations of the other in the following words, *We beseech thee to hear us, good L—d!* So that, for hours together, the parrots would thus entertain themselves and their auditors; one crying, *The d—l take my mistress,* and the other uttering immediately afterwards, *We beseech thee to hear us, good L—d!*

Birds, as well as men, who talk a great deal, may sometimes happen to drop a pertinent expression, or, as the phrase is, say a good thing. Willoughby relates a story of a parrot, which will illustrate this observation. Though it has been mentioned by Dr. Goldsmith, and many other authors, we hope we shall stand excused for introducing it here. These are his words, A parrot belonging to king Henry the Seventh, who then resided at West-

minster, in his palace by the river Thames, had learned to talk many words from the passengers as they happened to take water. One day, sporting on its perch, the poor bird fell into the water, at the same time crying out, as loud as he could, *A boat, twenty pound for a boat!* A waterman, who happened to be near, hearing the cry, made to the place where the parrot was floating, and taking him up restored him to the king. As it seems the bird was a favourite, the man insisted that he ought to have a reward rather equal to his services than his trouble; and as the parrot had cried twenty pounds, he said the king was bound in honour to grant it. The king at last agreed to leave it to the parrot's own determination, which the bird hearing, cried out, *Give the knave a great."*

Our naturalists have, in vain, attempted to arrange the various species of this bird. Linnæus makes the number of its varieties amount to forty-seven; and Brisson doubles that number, extending his catalogue to ninety-five. This list might perhaps be increased, were every accidental change of colour to be considered as constitut-

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ing a new species. Those who usually bring over these birds seldom make more than three or four distinctions. The large kind, which are about the size of a raven, are called maccaws and cockatoos; the next are simply called parrots; those which are entirely white are called lories, and the smallest size of all are called parakeets. Though these are different in size, they are all formed alike, having two toes before, and two behind, for climbing and holding: they have all strong hooked bills for breaking open nuts and other hard substances out of which they feed; and they have loud harsh voices, which make their native woods resound.

The toes of these birds are singularly contrived, which evidently appear when they walk or climb, and when they are eating: for walking or climbing, they stretch two of their toes forward, and two backward; but when they use the foot to convey the meat to their mouths, they dexterously turn the greater hind toe forward so as to take a firmer grasp of what they are going to feed on, standing upon the other leg the whole time. They do not, like other animals, turn their meat inwards to the mouth,

mouth, but, in a seeming awkward position, turn it outward, and in that manner hold the hardest nuts, till they break the shell with their bills, and extract the kernel.

The bill is of a peculiar kind, for both the upper and lower chaps are moveable. In most other birds the upper chap is connected, and makes one piece with the skull; but in these it is joined to the bone of the head by a strong membrane, placed on each side, that raises and depresses it at pleasure. Thus they are enabled to open their bills the wider; which is extremely convenient, as the upper chap is so hooked, and hangs so much over, that if only the lower chap had motion, they could hardly gape wide enough to receive their nourishment.

The beak and the toes are often employed both together, when the parrot is exercised in climbing. He cannot, like the other birds, hop from bough to bough, its legs not being adapted for that purpose; it first catches hold with the beak, as if with a hook; then it draws up its legs and fastens them; afterwards it advances the head and the beak again; and thus puts forward the body

body and the beak alternately, till it attains the height it aspires to,

The tongue of the parrot resembles the human tongue, on which account some imagine it is so well qualified to imitate the human voice; but the organs, by which these sounds are articulated, lie farther down in the throat, being performed by the great motion of the os hyoides.

Though a common bird in Europe, the parrot will not breed here; the climate being too cold for its warm constitution. When arrived at maturity, it is able to endure our winter, yet it is in some degree effected by its rigour, its spirit and appetite being impaired during the colder part of that season. This bird, however, lives a considerable time, even with us, if properly attended to; and, indeed, it is to be lamented, that too much of the attention of some people is engaged in this business. The best excuse that can be pleaded by those who spend whole hours in teaching their parrots to speak, is their extreme sagacity and docility; and indeed, on those occasions, the bird seems the wisest animal of the two. In those families where the master or the
mistress

mistress have the least to do, this bird receives the greatest instruction, and becomes more expert in proportion to the assiduity of its teachers. The French ladies spend a great part of their time in instructing their feathered pupils, and it must be acknowledged that the parrots in France speak much more distinctly than those in England, in consequence of their continual schooling. But, even the parrots of France are much inferior to those of the Brasils, where their education is considered as a very serious affair. Clusius assures us that the parrots of that country are the most sensible and cunning of all animals not endued with reason. There is a large bird of this kind there, called the aicurous, the head of which is red, violet, and yellow; the body green; the ends of the wings red, and the tail long and yellow. This animal is seldom brought into Europe, but it is a prodigy of understanding. "A certain Brazilian woman," says Clusius, "that lived in a village two miles distant from the island on which we resided, had a parrot of this kind which was the wonder of the place. It seemed indued with such understanding."

derstanding, as to discern and comprehend whatever she said to it. As we sometimes used to pass by that woman's house, she used to call upon us to stop, promising, if we gave her a comb, or a looking-glass, that she would make her parrot sing and dance to entertain us. If we agreed to her request, as soon as she had pronounced some words to the bird, it began not only to leap and skip on the perch on which it stood, but also to talk and to whistle, and imitate the shoutings and exclamations of the Brasilians when they prepare for battle. In brief, when it came into the woman's head to bid it sing, it sang; to dance, it danced. But if, contrary to our promise, we refused to give the woman the little present agreed on, the parrot seemed to sympathize in her resentment, and was silent and immoveable; neither could we, by any means, provoke it to move either foot or tongue."

This sagacity seems also natural to parrots in their native residence among the woods. They flock together, and mutually assist each other against their enemies. They usually breed in hollow-trees, where they make a round hole, and have no lining to their nests.

The largest parrots lay two or three eggs, but it is probable that the smaller kind may lay more; it being an invariable rule in nature, that the smallest animals are the most prolific. In general, however, they have but two eggs, like those of the pigeon, and nearly of the same size; marked with little specks, like those of the partridge. Travelers assure us, that the nests of parrots are always found in the trunks of the tallest, straightest, and the largest trees. The natives of those countries are very assiduous in spying out the places where they nestle; and, as those birds which are taken young have always the greatest docility, a nest is considered as worth taking some trouble to be possessed of: the usual method, therefore, is to cut down the tree; and though, in the fall, it frequently happens that the young parrots are killed; yet, if one of them should survive, the spoiler considers himself as sufficiently rewarded.

But, as the natives cannot always supply the demand for young ones, they are contented to take the old; which they shoot in the woods with heavy arrows, headed with cotton, which usually stuns the bird, and brings it to

the ground without killing it. After receiving this blow, some of the parrots die, and others recover. Those which are restored become talkative by proper tuition, tender usage, and plentiful feeding.

But the savages are not thus industrious to procure these birds merely for their conversation; for, though some of them are ill-tasted, others are very delicate food; particularly those of the small parakeet tribe. Labat assures us that the parakeet kind in Brasil, are the most beautiful in their plumage, and the most talkative birds in nature. They are extremely tame, appear delighted in the company of mankind, and are fond of holding a parley with him: but unhappily for them, they are possessed of another quality which is sufficient to put an end to this association: their flesh is the most delicate that can be imagined, and is highly esteemed by those who had rather indulge their appetites than their ears.

There are indeed many motives for destroying these beautiful birds, notwithstanding which they are in very great plenty; and are considered by the negroes, on the coast of Guinea, as

their greatest tormentors. They are persecuted with the incessant screaming of flocks of parrots, which also devour whatever fruits they attempt to produce by art in their little gardens. They are not indeed quite so numerous and destructive in other places; but there is hardly a country of the tropical climates that has not many of the common kinds, as well as some which are peculiarly its own. Upwards of an hundred different kinds have been enumerated by travellers, on the continent of Africa only; and there is one country in particular, north of the Cape of Good-Hope, which takes its name from the multitude of parrots that inhabit its woods. White parrots are seen in the burning regions of Ethiopia; in the East-Indies they are of the largest size; they are docile and talkative in South-America; they swarm in great variety and abundance in all the islands of the Pacific Sea, and the Indian Ocean, and add to the splendour of those woods which are cloathed in continual verdure.

Though these birds are at present so universally known, and their variety so great, there was only one kind of them known

known among the ancients. The green parakeet, with a red neck, was the first of this sort that was brought into Europe, and the only one that was known to the ancients from the time of Alexander the Great to the age of Nero. This was brought over from India; and when the Romans became industrious to discover new and unheard-of luxuries, they found others in Gauda, an island of Ethiopia, which they considered as a discovery of the utmost consequence.

Though parrots have usually the same disorders with other birds, and some peculiar to their kind, they are generally long-lived; and, if properly attended, will live from twenty-five to thirty years. Condamine observes that the Americans, on the banks of the river Oyapœ, have the art of engrafting feathers of a different colour on the parrot.

THE WHITE-CRESTED PARROT.

THE body of this parrot is entirely white, and it has a red crest on the head. It is about the size of a tame

pigeon, and carries its tail lifted up. The feet are yellowish, by which it may be distinguished from all the other parrots. The tongue is brown, and the eyes of a dirty yellow. The legs and thighs are short, and, after breeding time, these parrots fly in flocks.

THE WHITE-HEADED PARROT.

THE bill of this bird, and that part of the head next to it is white: the throat and the edges of the wings are red, and the lower part of the breast is of a dark red. The back part of the head, the neck, the back, the wings, and tail, are of a deep green; but the breast and thighs are of a paler green. On account of the various colours, this bird might, with propriety, have been called the variegated parrot; but green is the most predominant colour.

THE GREEN PARROT.

THIS bird is about the size of a tame pigeon. The upper part of the bill is extremely black; next to that it is bluish, then it is red, and white underneath.

neath. It is about fifteen inches in length, and the head is yellowish, but the rest of the body is green. The back and wings are of a deeper colour, and the upper edges of the wings are red. The tail is short, the lower part of the sides are red, the upper part yellowish, and the legs and feet are of an ash-colour. This bird is frequently seen in England; some of them have a circle about the eyes, and a process on each side of the upper part of the bill, opposite to which there is a cavity on the lower part.

THE GREEN BLACK-BILLED
PARROT.

THIS bird is of a bluish green-colour on the top of the head, at the root of the bill, and under the throat. The upper part of the body is of a deep green, except that the sides of the wings next the body are of a beautiful scarlet as well as at the extremities. The lower part of the wings is yellow, tinged with green, and the lower part of the tail is scarlet.

THE RED AND BLUE PARROT
OF ALDROVANDUS.

THE bill of this bird is smaller than that of the preceding, and is blackish. The head, neck, and breast are blue, except that the top of the head is yellow. The parts above the eyes are whitish, the belly green, and the tail yellow. The top of the back is of a pale blue, and the feathers that cover the wings of a faint rose colour. The length of this bird, from the end of the back to the extremity of the tail, is about nine inches.

THE SCARLET ORIENTAL
PARROT.

THIS is somewhat larger than a black-bird, and the body is entirely of a scarlet colour. The wings are green, except the prime feathers, which are black above, and crimson below, and the edges of them are yellow. The tail is of a yellowish green on the top, and yellow in the middle: it has a ring of green feathers above the knees. The bill, and the iris of the eyes, are yellow,

low, and the legs are short and black. It is naturally an inhabitant of the East-Indies.

THE ASH-COLOURED PARROT.

THIS bird, which is about the size of a tame pigeon, has a black bill. The body is wholly of an ash-colour, the tail is red and very short, hardly extending beyond the points of the wings: the eyes are surrounded with a bare white skin. It is found in many parts of Africa, particularly in Guinea, from whence many of them are brought to England.

THE RED AND WHITE PARROT.

THIS bird is about the size of a maccaw, being about seventeen inches in length, and has a very short tail. The body is of a dusky white, and the hind parts of the back, rump, tail, and prime feathers are scarlet. This is one of those which are called poppin-jays,

THE

THE BLUE-FACED GREEN
PARROT.

THIS bird, which is about the size of a pullet, has an ash-coloured bill, with a spot of orange colour on each side of the upper chap, which is moderately hooked, and has an angle on each side. The nostrils are placed on a skin which falls a little way over the bill, and the bill is furrounded with blue feathers. The eyes, which are placed in this blue space, are furrounded with a narrow bare skin, of a flesh-colour. The circles round the pupils of the eyes are of an orange colour, and on the throat, below the blue, is a plat of red feathers: the hind part of the head and neck, the back and covert feathers of the wings, and the breast, belly, and thighs, are of a beautiful green, but darker on the back, and lighter on the under side. The larger wing feathers are blue, and those following them are blue at their tips, and red at their bottoms. The tail above is yellow. Some of the inner webs of the outer feathers are red towards the

roots.

roots, and the legs, feet, and claws, are of a flesh-colour.

THE GREEN AND RED PARROT.

THIS is a native of China, and is about the size of a common hen: the upper chap of the bill is red at its base, and inclining to yellow at the point, which has an angle on each side, and is pretty much hooked. The lower chap is black, and the nostrils are situated between the feathers of the head and the base of the bill; there being no skin over the base, as there usually is in most of the parrot kind. It is also singular in having the feathers continued close to the eyes. Round the pupils of the eyes, it has circles of a bright orange-colour, and the head, neck, back, and covert feathers of the wings are of a beautiful deep green; as are also the breast, belly, and upper part of the tail. The greater quills of the wings are of a fine blue, and the first row of the covert feathers above them are of the same colour. The border of the wing, which falls on the breast, is also blue. The inside of the quills, and the under side of the tail, are blackish, and the

the tips of the tail feathers, on the under side, are of a brownish yellow. The thighs and covert feathers beneath the tail, are green, and the legs, feet, and claws, are black. This, according to Mr. Edwards, is an uncommon bird.

THE HAWK-HEADED PARROT.

THIS bird, which is about the size of a small pigeon, is remarkable for having a long tail, in proportion to its body. The bill is of a dusky-colour, pretty much hooked, and has sharp angles on the side of the upper chap. The iris of the eyes are hazel, surrounded with a bare skin of a blackish colour. The head is brown, with some light feathers on the middle, and some dark ones on the borders. The neck, breast, and belly are reddish, inclining to purple, fringed with feathers of a very bright blue. The back, rump, and upper sides of the wings, are of a beautiful green; and the tips of the greater quills of a dark blue. The middle of the upper side of the tail is green, and the side feathers are also green, except at the tips, which are of

a dark blue. The thighs and covert feathers beneath the tail are of a pale green, and the legs, feet, and claws, of a lead-colour. It is an inhabitant of the East-Indies, and, when offended, it raises the feathers on the neck like a ruff.

THE DIMINUTIVE GREEN PARROT.

THIS is an Ethiopian bird, and does not exceed the chaffinch in magnitude. The body is wholly green, but lighter on the belly than on the back. Such of the tail feathers as are fixed to the rump, are of a yellowish green, the next are of a bright red, and the next to those are tinged with green. The head, and all the covert feathers of the throat are of a bright shining red; and the bill, which is thick and strong, is of a reddish colour. The legs are ash-coloured; and the claws long and white.

THE DUSKY PARROT.

THE colours of this parrot are not so agreeable as in most others of the kind.

kind. It is about the size of a common pigeon : the upper chap is black in the middle, and the skin at the root is of the same colour : the base of the bill is yellow, and gradually becomes red at the point. The top of the head is blackish ; the sides, and the hind part of the neck being greenish. The back is dusky, the rump greenish, and the upper side of the tail green ; but the outer webs of the two extreme feathers are blue. The throat, a little below the bill, is of a bright blue, and the breast, belly, and thighs are of a dusky black. The wings are green, the quills next the back having yellow borders. This is a native of New-Spain, in America.

THE WHITE-BREASTED PARROT.

THIS bird is also about the size of a pigeon, and the bill has angles on its edges, with a narrow skin at the base of the upper chap. The whole of the bill is of a dusky flesh-colour ; but, lightest at the base ; a flesh-coloured bare skin surrounds the eyes, and the crown of the head is black. At each
corner

corner of the mouth is a longish green spot; the throat and sides of the head are yellow, but the hind part of the neck gradually becomes orange. The back, rump, and tail are green; and the outer webs of the greater feathers of the wings are blue; but those in the middle are yellowish. The rest of the quills next the back are entirely green, as are all the covert feathers above them. The breast is white, and the lower part of the belly and the thighs are of an orange colour. The legs are ash-coloured, and the claws black. This parrot is an inhabitant of the West-Indies.

THE BLACK CAPPED LORY.

THIS parrot, which is about the size of a turtle-dove, has a bill of an orange-colour. At the base of the upper chap, it has a dusky flesh-coloured skin, and the eyes have a bright golden iris, being encompassed with spaces of bare skin of an obscure flesh-colour. The crown of the head is covered with black feathers, those on the hinder part having a bluish cast. The other part of the head, the neck,
M back,

back, rump, the covert feathers above the tail, the breast, and upper parts of the thighs, are of a bright scarlet, except a space behind, between the neck and the back, which has a small mixture of red, and another on the lower part of the breast, also mixed with red. The belly, the lower part of the thighs, and the coverts beneath the tail, are of a fine blue. The upper part of the tail is also blue, though the middle feathers have something of a blackish shade. The inner webs of the tail feathers are yellowish : the upper sides of the wings are green, and some of the middle quills are yellow on the borders of their webs. The inner webs of the quills are of a beautiful yellow, except at the tips, where they are dusky, and the covert feathers on the inside of the wings are red ; the ridge of them being somewhat yellowish. This is an inhabitant of the East-Indies.

THE SCARLET LORY.

THIS is about the size of the blue dove-house pigeon, and is red at the crown of the head : the upper chap
hang

hangs over the other, and is yellow. The irides are of a beautiful orange-colour, and are encompassed by a bare ash-coloured skin. The head, neck, and body, and the coverts of the tail, are of a shining scarlet, except the feathers on the lower part of the neck behind, which are tipped with yellow. The upper part of the thighs is red, and the lower part green. The greater quills of the wings are of a dark green, with a bluish cast; and those which fall over them are of a lighter green. The ridge of the wings below the joint is blue, and the inner webs of the first ten quills are red, except at the tips, which are blackish. The upper part of the tail is of a fine blue, except that the middle feathers are a little tinged with green. The inner webs of the tail feathers are red at their bottoms, and yellowish at the tips, and the legs and feet are bluish, inclining to black.

THE LONG-TAILED SCARLET LORY.

THIS is smaller than the former, and has a longer tail, which is some-

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what pointed ; the middle feathers being almost two inches longer than those of the sides. The bill is strong, and of an orange-colour, and the nostrils are placed almost close together in a dusky skin, at the base of the upper part of the bill. It has a bare skin, of a dusky colour, round the eyes, and the head, neck, and body, are of a fine scarlet ; the sides under the wings, the thighs, and covert feathers of the tail, being also of the same colour ; the fore-part of the neck and breast is somewhat lighter, with a little yellow on the edges of the feathers. The greater and middle quills of the wings are red tipped with green ; but those next the back are of a beautiful blue. The first row of the coverts of the wings are red, tipped with green, and the lesser are entirely red, except that part of the wing next the joint, which is green. The feathers on the tail are of a duller red than those on the body : the two outer feathers, and the tips of the others, have a little tincture of green, and the legs and feet are blackish. This description is taken from a bird that was brought from the island of Borneo, in the East-Indies.

THE

THE BLUE AND YELLOW
MACCAW.

THIS bird is equal in magnitude to a well-fed capon, and is three feet long, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail: the bill is black, and very much hooked, forming almost a semi-circle, and is three inches in length; the thickness at the base being about two inches and an half. The length of the tail is eighteen inches; the legs are very short, and of a dusky-colour; the feet are of the same colour, and the claws are black. The top of the head is flat, and of a green-colour, and the skin round the eyes is ornamented with black feathers. A kind of black ring surrounds the neck; the upper part of the body is of a beautiful blue, and the lower part is yellowish.

THE GREAT MACCAW.

THIS is about the size of that which next precedes it. The bill is shorter, the upper mandible is white, and the lower black. The space about the eyes

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and

and temples is whitish ; the whole body, part of the wings, and all the tail are of a beautiful red : the inner part of the prime feathers of the wings are of the same colour. The outer parts of the wings are of a deep blue, as well as the lower part of the tail. The second row of the quill feathers are yellow, edged with red, with a kind of bluish eye at the point. The legs are short, and the feet of a dark brown.

The arraracanga of Marcgrave, differs but little from this bird, except that the feathers on the wings are green half-way, and that half which is towards the extremity is blue.

THE BRASILIAN MACCAW.

THE bill of this bird is black, and the eyes are of a sky-blue, with a black pupil : the skin which furrounds the eyes, is spotted with black and white, and the legs and feet are brown. It has a kind of cap on the fore-part of the head, consisting of green feathers ; and a circle of black feathers under the throat. The sides of the neck, the whole of the breast, and the lower-part of the belly, are covered with yellow

feathers. The hind-part of the head, the neck, back, and wings are cloathed with blue feathers; except that those at the extremities of the wings are mixed with yellow; and the tail consists of long blue and yellow feathers.

THE COCKATOO.

OF these there are two kinds: the greater cockatoo is about the size of a raven, and has a large strong bill, with a skin over the base of the upper-chap, where the nostrils are placed. Both the skin and bill are of a blueish black; and, in proportion to the body, the head is large. The eyes are of a dark colour, surrounded with a bare ash-coloured skin; and the feathers of the head are very long and loose, but those at the top of the head are longest, which the bird can raise at pleasure. This is the method it takes to express its resentment when it is offended. The plumage, in general, is white, though tinged with other colours in many parts. The tail is short, and consists of feathers of an equal length. The legs and feet are of a lead-colour, and the toes resemble those of other parrots.

It

It is an East-Indian bird, and is frequently heard to cry cockatoo very distinctly.

There is a lesser cockatoo, which resembles the other in every particular, except in magnitude.

The paragua is a black parrot, with a red breast, back, and belly : the circle round the eyes is red, and the bill and feet are of a dusky ash-colour.

The tarabe is a parrot with a red head and breast. It is also red at the beginning of the wings, but green in every other part. The bill and feet are of a dusky ash-colour.

THE LITTLE PARROT of BONTIUS.

THIS bird is about the size of a lark, with a grey bill and throat. The circle round the pupil of the eyes is of a pure white ; and it can raise the feathers, like a crest, at the top of the head. The head, neck, and tail, and the lower part of the belly, are of a bright red : the breast, and lower feathers of the tail, are of a pale rose-colour, terminating in a beautiful mixture of green and white. The wings
are



Cockatoo



Turtle

Rock Pidgeon





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are principally green, though intermixed with a few red feathers, the middle parts of which are variegated with rose colour and yellow.

THE LORY PARROKEET.

THE length of this bird is eight inches, and the bill is of a bright orange-colour; but the circle round the eyes is reddish, inclining to orange; which is surrounded by a bare ash-coloured skin. The crown of the head is covered with feathers of a dark blue-colour, behind which there is a crescent of scarlet, with the horns pointing towards the eyes. The ears are covered with dark blue feathers, behind which they are yellow. Below the eyes, on each side of the head, is a fine scarlet; and the throat and breast are of the same colour; except that the feathers on the breast are tipped with a blackish green. The back part of the neck, the back, wings, and lower sides of the body are green, a little tinged with yellow. The feathers on the middle of the back, and on the sides of the belly, are also tipped with yellow. Some of the quills are bordered with yellow,

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as well as those of the bastard wing: the rest of the wing is entirely green, as are also the upper-part of the tail, and its coverts. The feathers are long in the middle, and shorten gradually towards the sides. The legs, feet, and claws of this bird are of a dark ash-colour. It is an inhabitant of the East-Indies.

THE RED-BREASTED PAR-ROCKET.

THE bill of this bird is white, inclining to yellow, with a very narrow skin on the upper-part, in which the nostrils are situated. The upper part of the mandible is not so hooked as in most of the parrot kind, and the edges on the sides are waved. It has blue feathers round the bill, which extend a little way over the crown. The head is green behind, and on each side. A yellow ring encompasses the hind-part of the neck, below which it is green all round. The back, rump, and upper-sides of the wings and tail are of a fine green colour. The breast is reddish, inclining to yellow: the belly, and the under-sides of the wings, are of a dark green.

green, with a little mixture of red. The thighs, and the covert feathers under the tail, are yellow, interspersed with green. The legs, feet, and claws are of a dusky colour. This bird is an inhabitant of the East-Indies.

THE LONG-TAILED GREEN PARROKEET.

THIS bird is about the size of a thrush, and, in proportion to its bulk, has a longer tail than most of the parrot tribe. The bill is of a flesh-colour, and the iris of the eyes of an ash-colour next the pupil, but reddish outwardly. A bare flesh-coloured skin furrounds the eyes, and the whole plumage is green, except a variety of shades inclining to other colours. It inhabits the West-Indies.

THE GOLDEN-CROWNED PARROKEET.

THE bill of this bird is black, and the upper-chap is hooked at the point, having angles on the sides. At the base of the upper-chap is a narrow skin of a blueish flesh-colour, in which are placed

placed the nostrils. A bare skin, of the same colour, surrounds the eyes, and the irides are of a bright orange colour. The rest of the head, the neck, back, the upper-sides of the wings and tail are of a darkish green. The throat is of a yellowish green, tinged with a reddish brown; the breast, belly, and the covert feathers under the tail, are of a light yellowish green. Some of the quills between the shortest and the longest next the body, are blue on the outside: and those on the first row of the covert feathers, which fall on these, are also blue, and together form a bar of blue down the wings. The inside of the wings, and the lower-side of the tail, are of an olive-colour: the legs and feet are of a palish red. This parrokeet is about the size of a black-bird, and the tail alone is three inches and an half long. It is a native of Brasil.

THE ROSE-HEADED RING PARROKEET.

THE length of this bird is ten inches, from the bill to the end of the tail, of which the tail is five inches and an half.

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The upper-chap of the bill is of a pale yellow, hooked at the point, and angled at the sides : the lower-chap is of a dusky colour. The fore-part of the head is of a reddish rose-colour, which gradually becomes blue on the back-part of the head. Below the bill, the feathers are black for the space of an inch ; from which a black line extends backwards on each side, and, going round the neck, divides the head from the body. The body is entirely green, but darker on the upper-side, and the belly has a yellowish cast. Some of the smaller covert feathers, on the upper-part of the wing, are of a dusky red-colour, and form a large spot. The inner-coverts of the wings are of a yellowish green, and the quills are dusky on the inside. Some of the outer webs of the quills are of a yellowish green, and the tail consists of blue feathers, ending in points. The legs, feet and claws are of an ash-colour. This bird is an inhabitant of Bengal, in the East-Indies.

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THE LITTLE RED-HEADED
PARROKEET.

THIS bird, which is also called the Guinea sparrow, is about five inches in length; having a short tail, with feathers of an equal length. The bill is of an orange-colour, and the upper-chap is hooked at the point; but there are no angles at the edges. The nostrils are between the bill and the feathers of the forehead: the bill is encompassed with bright scarlet feathers, which extend almost to the eyes: narrow spaces of ash-coloured skin surround the edges, which are black. The back part of the head, the neck, back, and upper parts of the wings, are of a beautiful green; the throat, breast, belly, and covert feathers under the tail, are of a lighter green, with a yellowish cast. The quills of the wings are of a dark ash-colour within side. The lesser covert feathers within the wing are black, and the ridge of the wing is blue about the joint. The covert feathers on the upper side of the tail are green, and the rump is covered with fine blue feathers. The two mid-

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dle feathers of the tail are green ; and the rest, which consist of five on each side, are green near the bottom or roots, which is succeeded with a transverse bar of a scarlet colour ; after that a narrower black bar ; and the tips of the feathers are green. The covert feathers of the tail are so long, that the colours of the tail cannot be seen, except it be a little spread. The legs, feet, and claws, are of a dusky colour. This is an inhabitant of Guinea.

THE LITTLE GREEN AND BLUE PARROKEET.

THE length of this bird is about three inches and an half. The bill, and the skin at the base of it, are of a gold colour, and the upper-chap is hooked, and waved on the edges. The skin round the eyes, the legs, feet, and claws, are of an orange-colour. The head, neck, back, and belly, are of a deep green, except the first row of the covert feathers above the quills, which is of a fine deep blue. The outer edges of the quills are of a yellowish green ; the lower-part of the back, and the covert feathers of the upper-part of

the tail, are of a sky-blue. The tail is of a bright green above, but somewhat paler underneath.

THE COMMON PIGEON.

THIS is the pigeon domestique of Brisson. The tame pigeon, and all its beautiful varieties, derive their origin from one species, the stock-dove; the name implying its being the stock or stem from whence the other domestic kinds have proceeded. This bird, in its natural state, is of a deep bluish ashy-colour; the breast is dashed with a fine changeable green and purple; the sides of the neck with a shining copper-colour; the wings are marked with two black bars, one on the quill feathers, and the other on the coverts. The back is white, and the tail is barred near the end with black. These are the colours of the pigeon in a state of nature; and from these simple tints the art of man has propagated a variety, that words cannot describe, nor even fancy suggest. Nature, however, preserves her great out-line, and though the form and colour of these birds may be altered by art, yet their natural ha-

bits and inclinations continue still the same.

This species of pigeon is easily brought to build in artificial cavities, and, from the temptation of a ready provision, becomes domesticated without much difficulty. The drakes of the tame duck, though they vary greatly in colour, ever retain the mark of their origin from our English mallard, by the two curled feathers of the tail; and the tame goose is known to be descended from the wild kind, by the invariable whiteness of its rump, which, in both states they always retain.

From the domestic pigeon, many elegant varieties are produced, which are distinguished by names expressive of their several properties; such as tumblers, carriers, jacobines, croppers, pouters, runts, turbits, owls, nuns, &c. but it would be a vain attempt to mention them all; so much is the figure and the colour of this bird under human controul, that pigeon-fanciers, by coupling a male and female of different sorts, can breed them to a feather, as they express it.

The dove-house pigeon breeds every month; but, when the weather is se-

vere, or the fields are covered with snow, it is necessary to supply it with food. At other times, it may be left to provide for itself, and the owner is sufficiently repaid for affording it protection. It lays two white eggs, which usually produce young ones of different sexes. After the eggs are laid, the female continues to sit about fifteen days, relieved at intervals by the male. The turns are generally regulated with great exactness. The female continues to sit from about four in the evening till nine the next day; at which time she is relieved by the male, who supplies her place till three, while she is seeking provision abroad. Thus they alternately sit till the young are excluded. If, during this term, the female should neglect her duty, the male pursues her, and drives her to the nest: and if the male delays to return at the expected time, the female retaliates with equal severity. When the young are hatched, they require no food for the three first days, but they must be kept warm during that time, which is a duty the female takes upon herself to perform, and never leaves them, except for a few minutes to take a little food.

After

After this they are fed for eight or ten days, with what the old ones have gathered in the fields, and treasured up in their crops, from whence they discharge it into the mouths of their young, who receive it very greedily. This method of feeding the young from the crop, in birds of the pigeon kind, is different from all others. Pigeons, it is well known, live entirely upon grain and water : these are mixed together in the crop, and are digested in proportion as the bird lays in its provision. But when they are to feed their young, which are very voracious, they lay in a more plentiful supply, to give the food a kind of half maceration to adapt it to their tender appetites. Nature has, for this purpose, provided a very large crop for birds of the pigeon tribe ; and some of them, which are called croppers, distend it in such a manner, that the breast of the bird seems larger than the body. The necessity for this peculiar mechanism in these animals is very obvious. The young, with open mouths, receive from the crop this tribute of affection, and are thus fed about three times a day. The male usually supplies the young female with food,

food, and the female performs the same office for the young male. In the beginning, the young are supplied with food that is considerably macerated; but, as they grow older, the parents gradually give it less preparation, and at length send them out to shift for themselves. When they have plenty of provision, however, they do not wait for the total dismissal of their young: it is no uncommon thing to see young ones almost fit for flight, and eggs hatching, at the same time, and in the same nest.

Though the fidelity of the turtle-dove is proverbial, yet the pigeon of the dove-house cannot boast of that constancy, having received licentiousness from man among its other domestic habits. Two males are frequently seen quarreling for the same mistress; and sometimes two males, being displeased with their respective mates, have been known to make an exchange, and have lived with their new companions in perfect harmony.

The produce of this bird, in its domestic state, is so very extraordinary, that from a single pair, near fifteen thousand may be produced in the space

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of four years. The stock-dove, however, seldom breeds above twice a year; for, during the winter months, they are so fully employed in providing for their own preservation that they, neglect transmitting a posterity. But they have a stronger attachment to their young than those which often breed; owing perhaps to their affections being less divided by the multiplicity of claims.

Pigeons have a very piercing sight, and can hear at a vast distance. They are also very swift in flight, especially when they are pursued by the hawk or kite. The nature of pigeons is to be gregarious, to bill in their courtship, and to have a mournful or plaintive note.

Any lord of a manor may build a pigeon-house upon his land, but a tenant cannot do it without the lord's licence. When persons shoot at or kill pigeons within a certain distance of the pigeon-house, they are liable to pay a forfeiture.

In order to erect a pigeon-house to advantage, it will be necessary, in the first place, to pitch upon a convenient situation, of which none is more proper

per than the middle of a spacious courtyard, because pigeons are naturally of a timorous disposition, and are frightened at the least noise they hear. With regard to the size of the pigeon-house, it must depend entirely on the number of birds intended to be kept; but it is better to have it too large than too little; and as to its form, the round should be preferred to the square ones; because rats cannot so easily come at them in the former as in the latter. It is also much more commodious; because you may, by means of a ladder turning upon an axis, visit all the nests in the house without the least difficulty; which cannot so easily be done in a square house.

In order to hinder rats from climbing up the outside of the pigeon-house, the wall should be covered with tin-plates to a certain height, about a foot and a half will be sufficient; but they should project out three or four inches at the top, to prevent their clambering any higher.

The pigeon-house should be placed at no great distance from water, that the pigeons may carry it to their young ones; and their carrying it in their bills

bills will warm it, and render it more wholesome in cold weather.

The boards that cover the pigeon-house should be well joined together, so that no rain may penetrate through them. And the whole building should be covered with hard plaister, and white-washed within and without; white being the most pleasing colour to pigeons. There must be no window, or other aperture, in the pigeon-house to the eastward: these should always face the south, for pigeons are very fond of the sun, especially in winter.

The nests or covers in a pigeon-house, should consist of square holes made in the walls, of a size sufficient to admit the cock and hen to stand in them. The first range of these nests should not be less than four feet from the ground, that the wall underneath being smooth, the rats may not be able to reach them. These nests should be placed in quin-unx order, and not directly over one another. Nor must they be continued any higher than within three feet of the top of the wall; and the upper-row should be covered with a board projecting a considerable distance from the wall, for fear the rats should find

means to climb the outside of the house.

M. Duhamel thinks that pigeons neither feed upon the green corn, nor have bills strong enough to search for its seeds in the earth; but only pick up the grains that are not covered, which would infallibly become the prey of other animals, or be dried up by the sun. "From the time of the sprouting of the corn," says he, "pigeons live chiefly upon the seeds of wild uncultivated plants, and therefore lessen considerably the quantity of weeds that would otherwise spring up; as will appear from a just estimate of the quantity of grain necessary to feed all the pigeons of a well-stocked dove-house." But Mr. Worlidge and Mr. Lisle alledge facts in support of the contrary opinion. The latter relates, that a farmer in his neighbourhood assured him he had known an acre sowed with peas, and rain coming on so that they could not be harrowed in, every pea was taken away in half a day's time by pigeons: and the former says, "It is to be observed, that where the flight of pigeons falls, there they fill themselves and away, and return again where they

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first rose, and so proceed over a whole piece of ground, if they like it. Although you cannot perceive any grain above the ground, they know how to find it. I have seen them lie so much upon a piece of about two or three acres sown with peas, that they devoured at least three parts in four of the seed, which, I am sure, could not be all above the surface of the ground. That their smelling is their principal director, I have observed ; having sown a small plat of peas in my garden, near a pigeon-house, and covered them so well that not a pea appeared above ground. In a few days, a parcel of pigeons were busy in discovering this hidden treasure ; and, in a few days more, I had not above two or three peas left out of about two quarts that were planted ; for what they could not find before, they found when the buds appeared, notwithstanding they were hoed in, and well covered. Their smelling alone directed them, as I supposed, because they followed the ranges exactly. The injury they do at harvest on the peas, vetches, &c. is such, that we may rank them among the greatest enemies the poor husbandman meets

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withal; and the greater, because he may not erect a pigeon-house, whereby to have a share of his own spoils; none but the rich being allowed this privilege, and so severe a law being also made to protect these winged thieves, that a man cannot encounter them, even in defence of his own property. You have therefore no remedy against them, but to affright them away by noises, or such like. You may, indeed, shoot at them; but you must not kill them; or you may, if you can, take them in a net, cut off their tails, and let them go; by which means you will impound them: for when they are in their houses, they cannot bolt or fly out of the tops of them, but by the strength of their tails, after the thus weakening of which, they remain prisoners at home."

Mr. Worlidge, who talks of impounding the pigeons, reminds me of a humorous story of a gentleman, who, upon a neighbouring farmer's complaining to him that his pigeons were a great nuisance to his land, and did great mischief to his corn, replied jocularly, "Pound them, if you catch them trespassing." The farmer, improving the

the hint, steeped a parcel of peas in an infusion of coculus Indicus, or some other intoxicating drug, and strewed them upon his grounds. The pigeons swallowed them, and soon remained motionless on the field: upon which the farmer threw a net over them, inclosed them in it, and carried them to an empty barn, from whence he sent the gentleman word that he had followed his directions with regard to the pounding of his pigeons, and desired him to come and release them.

By the 2 Geo. III. c. 29. any person who shall shoot at, or by any means kill or take, with a wilful intent to destroy any pigeon, he shall, on conviction thereof, by confession, or oath of one witness, before one justice, forfeit twenty shillings to the prosecutor; and if not immediately paid, such justice shall commit him to the gaol or house of correction, for any term not exceeding three months, nor less than one; unless the penalty be sooner paid.

The pigeon was the favourite bird of Venus. Pigeons, says Homer, took care to provide for the nourishment of Jupiter; a fable founded on the same word signifying, in the Phœnician language,

guage, either a priest or a pigeon : for it is said that the Curetes, or priests of Cybele, took care of the nourishment of Jupiter. The inhabitants of Ascalon had a sovereign respect for pigeons; they durst not kill and eat them, for fear of feeding on their Gods themselves : they brought up with great care all those that were produced in their city. Pigeons were also consecrated by the Assyrians ; because they believed that the soul of their famous queen Semiramis had fled to heaven in the shape of a dove.

Silius Italicus says, that two pigeons formerly rested on Thebes, and that one flew to Dodona, where it gave an oak the virtue of delivering oracles; the other, which was white, passed over the sea, and flew to Libya, where it settled on the head of a ram, between the two horns, and gave oracles to the people of Marmarica. The pigeon of Dodona also delivered oracles: it was of gold, says Philostratus, settled on an oak, and surrounded by people who went thither, some to sacrifice, others to consult the oracle. There were always priests and priestesses there, who gained a good livelihood by the offerings.

offerings. Sophocles says, that pigeons of the forest of Dodona had given Hercules an oracle which determined the end of his life.

THE CARRIER.

THE carrier, from the superior attachment it shews to its native place, is employed in many places as a most expeditious courier. These pigeons are distinguished from all others by their eyes, which are surrounded with a broad circle of naked white skin, and by being of a dark blue or blackish colour. The upper-chap of the bill is also covered with the same kind of skin, which reaches from the base to below the middle. These birds are first brought from the place where they were bred, whither it is intended to send them back with information. The letter is tied under the wing, and the little animal is let loose to return. It no sooner finds itself at liberty, than its passion for its native spot directs all its motions. Upon these occasions it flies directly into the clouds to an amazing height; and then with the greatest certainty and exactness, directs itself by

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some surprizing instinct towards home, which is sometimes at a vast distance, bringing its advices to the persons to whom they are directed. How they discover the place, or by what chart they are guided in the right way, is utterly unknown to us; it is, however, certain, that in the space of an hour and an half they can perform a journey of forty miles; which the fleetest quadruped would be, at least, three times as long in performing. This practice of conveying dispatches was much in vogue in the East, and at Scanderoon, till very lately; Dr. Russel having assured us that the practice is now left off*. It was used there on the arrival of a ship, to give the merchants at Aleppo a more expeditious notice than could be done by any other means. Anciently these birds were brought up with extraordinary care, in order to be sent from governors in a besieged city, to generals that were coming to relieve it; from princes to their subjects, with the tidings of some fortunate events; or from lovers to their mistresses with a billet-doux. In our country, these

* Hist. Aleppo, 66.

aerial messengers have been employed for a very singular purpose, being set at liberty at Tyburn, at the instant the fatal cart is drawn away, to give notice to distant friends, of the departure of the unhappy criminal.

In the East, they had relays of pigeons, ready to spread intelligence to all parts of the country. When the commandant of Damietta received information of the death of Orillo, he let loose a pigeon, under whose wing he had tied a letter; this fled to Cairo, from whence another was dispatched, as is usual; by which means, in the space of a few hours, all Egypt was acquainted with the death of Orillo*. Anacreon also informs us, that he conveyed his billet-doux to his beautiful Bathyllus, by a dove†. Taurosthanes, by means of a pigeon, which he had decked with purple, sent advice to his father, who lived in the isle of Ægina, of his victory in the Olympic games, on the very day he had obtained it. At the siege of Modena, Brutus, who was within the walls, kept a constant correspondence with Hirtius without, by the

* Ariosto, canto xv.

† Anacreon, ode ix.

assistance of pigeons ; baffling every stratagem of the besieger, Antony, to intercept their couriers. These birds were frequently employed in the times of the crusades. Joinville relates one during the crusade of St. Louis, and Tasso another, during the siege of Jerusalem. The carriers are about the size of a common pigeon.

THE RING-DOVE.

ATTEMPTS have been made to domesticate this species, by hatching their eggs under the common pigeon in dove-houses, but as soon as they could fly, they betook themselves to the woods, where they were originally produced. The ring-dove is considerably larger than the former, and makes its nest of a few dry sticks in the boughs of trees. In the beginning of winter, these birds assemble in the woods in great flocks, and leave off cooing ; nor do they resume this note of courtship till the beginning of March, which they continue to practise till the approach of winter. The ring-dove is the largest of the pigeon tribe, and may immediately be distinguished from all

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The PIGEON.

others by its size. It is eighteen inches in length, thirty in breadth, and weighs about twenty ounces. The head, back, and coverts of the wings are of a blueish ash-colour: the lower-part of the neck and the breast are purple inclining to red, and dashed with ash-colour. On the hind-part of the head is a semi-circular line of white, above and below which the feathers are glossy, and of changeable colours, as opposed to the light. The belly is of a yellowish white; the greater quill feathers are dusky, and the rest are ash-colored. There is a white stroke, pointing downwards, beneath the bastard wing.

THE TURTLE-DOVE.

THE turtle dove is a much shyer bird than any of the former. It may readily be distinguished from the rest by the iris of the eye, which is of a fine yellow, and a beautiful crimson-circle, which encompasses the eye-lids. The forehead is whitish; the top of the head ash-coloured, mixed with olive. On each side of the neck is a spot of black feathers, beautifully tipped with

with white : the back is ash-coloured, bordered with olive brown : the scapulars and coverts are of a reddish brown, spotted with black : the quill feathers are of a dusky brown ; the breast of a light purplish red, the verge of each feather being yellow : the belly is white, and the sides, and inner-coverts of the wings bluish. The tail, which is three inches and an half long, has two feathers in the middle, of a dusky brown ; the others being black, tipped with white. The head and exterior sides of the outward feathers are entirely white.

The fidelity of these birds is proverbial ; and a pair being put in a cage, if one dies, the other will not long survive it. The turtle-dove is a bird of passage, and few or none remain in our northern climates in winter, unless they are kept in aviaries or cages. They fly in large flocks when they come to breed here in summer, and delight in open, mountainous, sandy countries. They build their nests, however, in the midst of woods, and select the most retired situations for incubation. They feed upon all sorts of grain, but are particularly fond of millet-feed. The turtle-dove is about twelve inches in length,

length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail; and the breadth, when the wings are extended, is twenty-two inches. We are told, by some naturalists, that this bird lays its eggs twice a year; and, if this assertion is true, it must be once with us, and once in hotter climates, for it certainly breeds here in summer.

The turtle-dove is the symbol of fidelity amongst friends, between husband and wife, and even of subjects towards their princes, and of armies to their generals. On the reverse of a medal of Heliogabalus, a woman is seen sitting, holding in one hand a turtle-dove with this inscription, *Fides exercitûs*. This symbol is founded on the male and female usually flying together, and her seeming to moan when she has lost her mate.

THE BARBARY PIGEON.

THIS bird is of a dark colour, inclining to black; the bill, legs, and feet, are black; and it has a small fleshy circle round the eyes, which are of a very lively colour. There is also a tuft of feathers rising from the back part of the neck, over the top of the

head. Some of this kind are also feathered on the legs and feet, but others are not. They likewise differ in colour; but those that are blackish are the most esteemed.

THE JACOBINE PIGEON.

THIS bird is also called a capper, because it has a tuft of feathers on the back-part of the head, which turns towards the neck, like the cap or cowl of a monk. The bill is short, and the iris of the eyes of a pearl colour.

THE BROAD-TAILED SHAKERS.

A bird of the pigeon kind is thus called from having its head and neck continually in motion. The number of its tail feathers is twenty-six, and when it walks, it carries its tail upright like that of a hen. There is also a sort called narrow-tailed shakers.

THE RUNT.

THIS is the greater domestic pigeon, and varies in its feathers like the common sort. It is almost as large as a pullet, and flies very slowly.

THE TUMBLER.

OF this species there are variety of colours. When they fly, they have very extraordinary motions, frequently turning themselves in the air like a ball that is thrown up.

The pigeon called a helmet, has the head, tail, and prime feathers of the wings of a distinct colour from the rest of the body.

THE PICUI PINIMA.

THIS is about the size of a lark, and is an inhabitant of Brasil. It has a brown bill, and shaped like that of the common pigeon: the eyes are black, surrounded with a bright yellow iris: the head, the top of the neck, the back, sides, and the wing feathers are all very long, and of an ash-colour. The tail is of a brownish ash-colour; but in some they are white, and black about the middle. Those on the belly are white, with brown edges, and the legs and feet are of the same colour. The flesh of this bird is esteemed very delicate.

Mr. Ray supposes the small Barbadoes turtle to be the same with the picui pinima of Marcgrave; or the wild pigeon of Brasil.

THE INDIAN TURTLE.

THIS bird is also called cocolzin; it is somewhat larger than a sparrow; the upper-part of the body is covered with brown feathers, edged with black. The fore-parts of the wings are partly black, and the rest is of a dusky-colour. The end of the tail is promiscuously tinged with white and brown, and the feathers on the lower-part of the body are white, ending in black lines. The head is small, and the bill is black: the legs and feet are whitish. They make a noise when flying; and frequent mountainous places. They grow very fat, and are thought delicate food, their flesh in great degree resembling that of the quail.

There is another Indian turtle, called the turtle of Aldrovandus. The female is entirely white, except the bill and the feet, the former of which is black, and the latter red. The male

is of the size of a common pigeon, and of a light red colour: the iris of the eyes is of a saffron colour, with a reddish cast, and a narrow black ring surrounds the neck.

THE MEXICAN PIGEON.

THIS bird is covered with dusky feathers, except on the breast, and the extremities of the wings, where they are of a dirty white. The iris of the eyes is red.

THE RING-TAILED PIGEON OF JAMAICA.

THE length of this bird is fifteen inches, and the breadth twenty inches: the length of the bill is three quarters of an inch, and it has a double protuberance at the base about the nostrils. The iris of the eyes is red, and the length of the tail is about five inches. The head, neck, and breast, are covered with feathers of a purple colour, and the belly with those that are white. The upper part of the neck is a greenish purple, shining, and changeable.

The back and tail are of a palish blue, and the wings are of a dusky colour.

There is another bird of this kind, that is an inhabitant of Jamaica. It is called the bald pate pigeon of Jamaica, and is eleven inches in length, and eighteen in breadth : the bill is half an inch in length, red at the base, and protuberant, but white below the nostrils. In the old birds, the top of the head is white, from whence their name is derived. The body is wholly of a darkish blue, except the upper-part of the neck is of a changeable blue and green.

THE GREENLAND PIGEON.

THE eyes of this bird are black, with a yellow iris, and, on the covert feathers of each wing, it has a white spot, but is black in every other part. It has twenty-seven feathers on each wing, and its legs and feet are of a bright red.

THE CHINESE PIGEON.

THIS bird, which is about the size of an Indian turtle, has a bluish ash-coloured

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loured bill, and the iris of the eyes of a fine white. The sides of the head are yellow; but the top, and the space round the eyes are of an ash-colour. The extremities of the feathers on each side of the head and neck are red, and there are blue feathers about the rise of the wings. The hind-part of the neck and back are brown, and the extremities of the feathers black: those on the shoulders are lighter, and variegated at the ends with black and white. The first and last covert feathers are black, with their external edges white; the long feathers of the wings are black, with white edges; and the breast and belly are of a beautiful pale rose-colour. The tail, which consists of twelve feathers, is a mixture of dusky and bright. The legs and feet are red, and the claws black.

To this might be added a long catalogue of foreign pigeons, of which we know little more than the plumage and the names: among these are the mawmets, the spots, the wild pigeon of the island of St. Thomas, the ocoztintzcan of Mexico, the great mountain Mexican pigeon, the Portuguese pigeon,

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geon, and two pigeons of Carolina, mentioned by Catesby.

OF BIRDS OF THE SPARROW KIND.

DESCENDING from the larger to the smaller, we come to birds of the sparrow kind : those which compose this class live chiefly in the neighbourhood of man, and are his greatest favourites. The turkey, and other birds of the poultry kind, are more useful ; but those he considers as his servants, not his friends : they are animals reclaimed merely to supply him with some of the conveniences of life ; but the little painted songsters possess his esteem, which they have obtained by their melody and beauty. It is this warbling class that fills his groves with harmony, and elevates his heart to sympathize with their raptures. All other birds are either mute or screaming ; and it is only this diminutive tribe that have voices equal to their beauty. All the great birds dread the vicinity of man, keep within the thickest forest, or on the brow of the most craggy precipice ; but these are usually near the edges of
the

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the wood, in the neighbourhood of cultivated fields, in hedge-rows, or mixing with the poultry in the farmer's yard.

It is not indeed from affection that they approach the residence of man, they prefer inhabited grounds, because their provision is to be found there in greater abundance. In the desert or the forest, there is no grain to be picked up; and even insects, that make so great a part of their food, are not to be found in plenty; their natures not being suited to the moisture of the place. The deeper we enter into uncultivated woods, the silence becomes more profound; an awful stillness reigns throughout: there are none of those warblings that waken attention and delight the ear; nothing of that confused but pleasing buz, formed by the united though distant voices of quadrupeds and birds; but all is profoundly dead and solemn. Indeed the traveller may sometimes be roused from this lethargy of life, by the cry of an heron, or the scream of an eagle; but his little warblers have forsaken him entirely.

Another reason why these little birds avoid the depths of the forest, is, that
their

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their most formidable enemies usually reside there.

Birds in general seem contented with a certain district to provide food and center in. Though fitted by nature for the most wandering life, these little animals seldom make such distant excursions as the stag or the leveret. Food appears to be the principal object that puts them in motion, and they never wander when that is provided for them in sufficient plenty. But, as that is seldom permanent throughout the year, birds in general are obliged to change their abode. Birds of passage are usually understood to be those that are obliged to take long journies for this purpose; but, strictly speaking, almost every bird is a bird of passage, though they may not emigrate to places so remote. Small birds, in general, emigrate at some particular season of the year, either from one county or district to another, or towards the shore from the more inland provinces.

Many persons obtain a livelihood, by watching the seasons when our small birds begin to emigrate from one county to another, by taking them with nets in their passage. Autumn is the principal

cipal season when the bird-catcher employs his art to take these wanderers. His net is an ingenious piece of mechanism, and so contrived, as, from a flat position to rise on each side, and clap over the birds that are decoyed between them. Birds, in their passage, are always observed to fly against the wind; therefore, if it is westerly, the bird catcher, who lays his nets most to the east, is certain of the greatest sport. His call-birds generally consist of five or six linnets, two green-finches, two gold-finches, a bull-finch, a wood-lark, a red-poll, a tit-lark, and a yellow-hammer. These are placed, in little cages, at a small distance from the nets. He has also what are called flur-birds, placed upon a moveable perch, which he can raise at pleasure by means of a string; which he lifts gently up and down as the wild bird approaches. But this is not sufficient to allure the wild bird down; it must be called by one of the call-birds in the cages. It is remarkable that these call-birds delight in bringing the wild ones into the same state of captivity. The allurements of their call is so great, that the wild bird is stopped in its most rapid flight on
hearing

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hearing it ; and, if unacquainted with the nets, boldly lights within twenty or thirty yards of the bird-catcher ; who immediately embraces the opportunity, pulls a string, the nets instantly rise on each side, and clap directly down upon the unfortunante visitant. Such a fascinating power have the call-birds, that sometimes, if half the flock only are caught, the remaining half will unsuspecting light between the nets, and become captives with their companions.

It is difficult to account for the nature of this call ; whether it be an invitation to food, a prelude to courtship, or a challenge to combat. Whatever is the motive, when taken, the males are made captives for singing, and the females are killed to be served up to the tables of the delicate, or the rich.

However contemptible these little creatures are to larger animals, they are frequently too formidable to each other: they are remarkably brave, and sometimes fight till one of them yields up his life with the victory. At other times their contentions are of a gentler nature. Two male birds striving in song, after a long struggle, the loudest shall

shall silence the other entirely. The female sits an attentive silent auditor on these occasions, and, if disengaged, enters into the connubial knot with the loudest songster.

Among birds, singing is the prerogative of the male ; the heaviest cares of life fall to the lot of the female. Hers is the fatigue of incubation, and to her devolves the principal labour of pursuing the helpless brood. Nature has given the song to the male, to support her under these fatigues, and to alleviate them. By that he first attracts her affections, and delights her during the time of incubation : it is also a note of security, to acquaint her that no danger threatens to molest her.

Little birds build a more delicate nest than those of the larger kind. As their bodies are smaller, the materials of which they compose their nests are usually warmer. Small things, we may easily conceive, cannot retain heat so long as those which are larger : the eggs of small birds therefore require a place of more constant warmth than those of large ones, as being sooner liable to cool. Accordingly their nests are made warmer
and

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and deeper, lined with softer substances in the inside, and are guarded with a better covering above. Sometimes the little architects are disturbed in their operations, and they have not time to erect another in so elegant a manner as they could wish. When the nest has several times been robbed of its eggs, it builds the last nest in a very slovenly manner, well knowing by natural instinct, that from the near approach of winter, it cannot afford time to make her habitation so commodious as it could wish. When the nest is finished, both the male and female employ great cunning to conceal it. If the little mansion is built in bushes, the pliant branches are dexterously disposed to hide it from the view; if situated among moss, nothing externally appears to shew that there is an habitation within.

All birds of the sparrow kind are first fed upon worms and insects. Even the gold-finch and the sparrow, that when adult feed only upon grain, have been fed upon insects while they continued in the nest. The young require no food for some time after their exclusion from the shell; but the parent discovers,

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covers, by their chirping and gaping, when they begin to feel the approaches of hunger, and flies to provide them a plentiful supply. During her absence, they preserve a perfect silence, and she announces her return by a chirrup, which they perfectly understand, and to which they immediately answer, each petitioning for its portion; and the parent distributes a supply to each by turns. The wren has been observed to feed sixteen or seventeen so regularly as not to omit a single one.

Addison is of opinion that birds observe a strict chastity of manners, which he has expressed in some beautiful Latin lines inserted in the Spectator.

Chaste are their instincts, faithful is their fire,
No foreign beauty tempts to false desire:
The snow white vesture, and the glittering crown,
The simple plumage, or the glossy down,
Prompt not their love. The patriot bird pursues
His well-acquainted suits, and kindred hues.
Hence through their tribes no mix'd polluted flame,
No monster breeds to mark the groves with shame:
But the chaste black-bird, to its partner true,
Thinks black alone is beauty's favourite hue;
The nightingale, with mutual passion blest,
Sings to its mate, and nightly charms the nest:
While the dark owl, to court his partner flies,
And owns his offspring in the yellow eyes.

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Naturalists

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Naturalists, indeed, differ in opinion with the poet with regard to this fidelity among the smaller tenants of the grove: they are less true to their species than the large birds. Of the ostrich, the cassowary, and the eagle, there are but few species, and, it is probable, they could not be induced to mix with each other by all the art of man.

It is otherwise, however, with regard to small birds: very little trouble is required to make a species between a gold-finch and a canary-bird, or between a linnet and a lark. They often breed together, and produce a motley mixture, as fruitful as their parents. But though this connection may be produced by art, it probably seldom happens in a state of nature.

Such of the smaller birds as live chiefly upon insects, have slender bills; and such as feed principally upon fruits or grain, have short strong bills. Among the former are the black-bird, the thrush, the field-fare, the lark, the starling, the nightingale, the tit-mouse, the water-wagtail, the robin-red-breast, the red-start, the beccafigo, the gold-finch, the stone-chatter, the winchat,

the

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the white-throat, the hedge-sparrow, the wren, the golden-crowned wren, the pettichaps, the humming-bird, and several others, which are strangers to this island.

As these birds feed principally on insects, they are of particular benefit to mankind. They clear his grounds of the pernicious swarms of vermin that devour the budding leaves and flowers, and attack even the root itself before the vegetable can come to maturity. These friendly birds also destroy the eggs of insects which would otherwise propagate in such numbers that they could not be extirpated by the arts of man. Nature directs them where to seek for them, and while they are satisfying their own appetites, they render man the most essential services. In this tribe we have also the sweetest songsters of the grove: their notes are softer, and their manner more musically soothing than the hard-billed birds. The best vocal performers of this musical tribe are the nightingale, the thrush, the black-bird, the lark, the red-breast, the black-cap, and the wren.

Birds of the sparrow kind, with short thick bills, are the gros-beak, the bull-
Q 2 finch

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finch, the green-finch, the cross-bill, the house-sparrow, the goldfinch, the chaffinch, the linnet, the brambling, the yellow-hammer, the ortolan, the fiskin, the bunting, the wheat-ear, and several foreign birds. These feed principally upon fruits, grain, and corn; and, as they are a numerous tribe, are often injurious to man: the harvest suffers from their depredations; and, if they are driven off from one end of the field, they immediately fly round, and come in at the other. But even these afford us pleasure to atone for the injuries we receive from them: there are some agreeable songsters in this tribe; they have a loud piercing pipe, with great modulation, variety, and perseverance. The warblers of this class are the canary-bird, the linnet, the gold-finch, the chaffinch, the green-finch, the bull-finch, the brambling, the yellow-hammer, and the fiskin.

Like the greater classes of birds, this has its wanderers, that emigrate for a season, and then return to propagate, to sing, or to embellish our fields and groves. Some disappear in one place, and are seen elsewhere, that never leave
the

the kingdom; but others take longer flights, and go to a warmer or colder region, as it suits their constitutions: the field-fare, and the red-wing, which pass their summers in Norway, and other cold countries, are invited hither by our mild winters, and the berries which are then found in great plenty with us, and of which their food principally consists. The cross-bill and the hawfinch have no stated times of emigration. Swallows of all kinds always disappear at the approach of winter. The nightingale, the fly-catcher, the black-cap, the wheat-ear, the willow-wren, the stone-chatter, and the winchat, depart before the approach of winter: but it is only when our winters are uncommonly severe that theiskin and the linnet forsake us. The rest of the smaller tribe reside wholly in this country, and endure the severest rigours of the climate.

The manners of our little birds do not, however, prevail in all other countries. Those kinds which are birds of passage in England have a fixed residence in some countries all the year round; and some birds, which with us are faithful residents, in other climates,

put on the nature of birds of passage, and disappear for a season.

In Upper-Egypt, and in the island of Java, the swallow breeds, and continues the whole year. Larks, which continue with us the whole year, are birds of passage in Sweden ; forsaking that climate in winter, to return with the returning spring. The chaffinch, that resides wholly with us, appears in Carolina and Virginia during the winter ; but goes in summer to breed in the more northern regions. The change of country with all this little tribe, is indeed a pilgrimage, rather than a journey ; an emigration less from choice than necessity.

THE THRUSH.

THE thrush and its affinities are the largest of the sparrow kind, and are distinguished from all others of this class, not only by their size, but by their bills, which are a little bending at the point ; by a small notch near the end of the upper-chap ; and by the outer-toe adhering as far as the first joint of the middle-toe.

The

The missel-thrush is much larger than any of the kind: it is eleven inches in length, sixteen in breadth, and weighs about five ounces. It differs but little from that well-known bird the throistle. The spots on the breast indeed are somewhat larger; and the inner coverts of the wings, which are white in the missel-thrush, are yellow in the throistle. The missel-thrush builds its nest in a bush, or on the side of a tree, sometimes in a thick hedge near the ground; and lays four or five eggs in a season. Its song is very fine, which it begins in spring, sitting on the summit of a high tree: but its note of fear or anger, is between a chatter and a shriek, and is extremely harsh and dissonant. Of all the feathered tribe, this is the largest that has music in its voice: those of greater magnitude can only chatter, scream, or croak. Its food are insects, holly, and the berries of missel-toe.

Thompson allows the imperfection of voice in the larger birds, but introduces them as the base in chorus, though unpleasing by itself. Thus sings that excellent poet.

The

The jay, the rook, the daw,
 And each harsh pipe (discordant heard alone)
 Aid the full concert : while the stock-dove breathes
 A melancholy murmur through the whole *.

The out-side of the thrush's nest consists of fine soft moss, interwoven with grass, hay, &c. The inside is very curiously plaistered with cow-dung. In this the black-bird differs from the thrush, as he always lines his nest with mud or clay : the black-bird lays a covering of soft stuff on the inside to lay her eggs upon; the thrush deposits hers upon the bare inside or plaistering. The eggs are of a bluish colour, tinged with green, speckled with small black spots, chiefly at the largest end. The depth of the nest is about two inches and an half; the diameter of the inside, at the top, four inches. In making the nest, the bird stands within side, making her own body the rule of her dimensions in building.

The young may be taken at twelve or fourteen days old, or sooner, if the weather be mild: they must be kept clean and warm, and fed with raw

* Seasons, Spring, lib. 606.

meat, bread, and hemp-seed bruised : the meat must be cut small, and the bread a little moistened, before they are mixed together. It is necessary that they should be fed once in about two hours.

THE BLACK-BIRD.

THE black-bird is one of the first that proclaims the welcome spring, by his shrill harmonious voice, as if he were the harbinger of nature, to awaken the rest of the feathered tribe to prepare for the approaching season. This bird is of a very retired and solitary nature, and frequents hedges and thickets. It breeds very early in the year, and frequently has young ones by the end of March. They build a very ingenious nest : the outside consists of moss, slender twigs, fibres of roots, all very strongly cemented with clay, the inside being plaistered with clay, and lined with straw, hair, or other soft materials. It lays four or five eggs, of a bluish green colour, marked with irregular dusky spots. The black-bird usually builds in a hedge near the ground, and before there are many
leaves

leaves upon the bushes ; and the nest on account of its magnitude, may be easily discovered. The young may be taken when they are about twelve days old.

The black-bird is the deepest toned warbler of the woods, but it is so loud in a cage as to be rather unpleasant. It begins to sing early in the spring, and continues its music part of the summer ; but desists in the moulting-season. It however re-assumes it for some time in the first winter months.

When the male has attained its full age, the colour is of a fine deep black, the bill of a bright yellow, and the edges of the eye-lids of the same colour. When young, the bill is dusky, and the plumage of a rusty black ; but they attain their proper colour at the age of one year. In cold countries, and particularly upon the Alps, this bird is sometimes seen all over white, and is a beautiful and canorous bird, whistling during the whole spring and summer, with a note, which, at a distance, is the most pleasing of all the grove.

The blue-bird, described by Bello-nius is, however, far superior to the black-

black-bird in every respect. This beautiful animal entirely resembles a black-bird in form : it lives in the highest parts of the Alps, and chooses the most craggy rocks, and the most frightful precipices for its residence. Being seldom caught, it is in high estimation even in the countries where it breeds, but still more valuable when carried into other countries. It not only whistles in a most enchanting manner, but speaks with a distinct articulate voice. It is a very docile and diligent bird. About the beginning of winter, its colour from the blue becomes black, which changes to its original hue on the approach of spring.

Black-birds, among us, are about a eleven inches in length, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail ; of which the bill is one inch, and the tail four inches : black-birds are not taken old and tamed, but always brought up from the nest.

THE FIELD-FARE.

FLOCKS of field-fares visit our islands about Michaelmas, and leave us about the beginning of March. It is
imagined

imagined that those which come here, have taken the flight from Norway, and the adjacent countries, forced away by the excessive rigour of the season in those cold regions : those in the more moderate climates, as Prussia, and Austria, not only breed, but winter in those countries. With us they are insipid tuneless birds, and extremely vigilant to preserve the general safety : but in the more northern countries they sing most delightfully. They build their nests in hedges, and lay five or six bluish green eggs, spotted with black. The weight of this bird is about four ounces ; the length is ten inches, and the breadth seventeen. The head is ash-coloured, inclining to olive, and spotted with black : the back, and greater coverts of the wings, are of a fine deep chesnut : the rump is ash-coloured, and the tail is black ; except the lower-parts of the two middle feathers, and the interior upper-sides of the outer feathers ; the first being ash-coloured, and the latter white. The legs are black, and the talons are very strong. The flesh of the field-fare is reckoned exceeding good.

THE END OF VOL. VI.







